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FIVE MINUTES TO TWELVE

TO-DAY there is only one question in all our minds—is there any way of preventing general war? The essential facts are simple. The Spanish Government's resistance is being battered down; the vital strategic points, including Ceuta, which overlooks Gibraltar, will soon be fortified posts in the hands of Germany and Italy. France will then have aggressive Powers on three frontiers and Britain's control of the Mediterranean ends. In Central Europe France and the U.S.S.R. have both agreed to fulfil their promise to fight with Czechoslovakia if Germany crosses her frontier. As there are three million Sudeten-Deutsch in Czechoslovakia and the country now forms a salient into German territory, the temptation to Hitler is serious. President Benes may well be willing to rid himself of this German menace within his territory, and now that Hitler has turned his flank in Austria, revision of the Bohemian frontier is strategically unimportant. A negotiated minorities settlement between Prague and Berlin would be welcomed in this country. The risk of general war arises from the possibility of Hitler repeating his Austrian coup. Uncertainty whether Britain would support France in that event increases the danger of a German attack just as British hesitation invited it in 1914.

* * *

Mr. Chamberlain must make up his mind. If he intends not to stand with France or look after the British Empire in Spain that would be intelligible as a way of keeping out of war for the moment. With a Nazi Europe and the Mediterranean lost, England could look forward, after a troubled time, to a future as a second-class Power. If Mr. Chamberlain is prepared for the price of isolation let him say so. We, for our part, regarding war as the greatest of all catastrophes and recalling the results of one war to prevent Germany holding the hegemony of Europe, would applaud and support such a decision. We have never advocated it in the past because we do not believe that Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Beaverbrook, or anyone else in the British ruling class really intends or can be induced to intend anything of the kind. It has always been axiomatic in British policy that we should stand by France, and if France is involved we believe Britain is involved too. If that is still the position, it is incumbent on Mr. Chamberlain to say so and to make it clear that we are involved if Czechoslovakia is attacked. There is still a chance that some hesitating States such as Poland would remain within the British, French and Russian orbit, that Germany would not think the risk of war worth undertaking. It is the edge of the abyss; the one intolerable thing is the Prime Minister's refusal to decide. Revolt among his own supporters is already threatening a Ministerial crisis.

* * *

Launched from the Teruel-Saragossa line, and supported by overwhelming German and Italian reinforcements of aircraft, tanks and artillery, this week's rebel

offensive in Aragon has dealt the Spanish Government the worst blow in the civil war. In the southern sector of his attack Franco has captured Montalban and the important Utrillas coalfield; farther north, a column driving down the valley of the Ebro has rolled back the Government forces beyond Alcañiz, and is within measurable distance of the coast. With the implications of this Fascist success from the angle of Europe's prospects of peace we deal in a leading article. From the military standpoint, the immediate threat to Republican Spain is serious. Thanks to the undisguised co-operation of Germany and Italy Franco has regained supremacy in the air; the Republican forces, judging by their ineffective resistance, are still no match, in a campaign of manoeuvre, against an army strengthened—as is the case in this offensive—by Italian divisions and the support of German technicians and staff. Between Franco and the coast-road lies a barrier of foothills in which Government resistance is reported to be growing stiffer; but, unless an air force equal in size to Franco's comes to the rescue, Barcelona, already in flames, may soon be lost and cut off from the Valencia-Madrid enclave. Thus cleft, and lacking Anglo-French naval support, the Republic would be in a desperate plight. Britain, through the blindness of its ruling class, would have lost the Peninsular War which Wellington won.

The French Cabinet

In his second attempt to form around the Front Populaire a Government of National Concentration, stretching from the Right Centre to the Communists, M. Blum has once again failed. In such a Ministry M. Thorez was willing to participate. The Radicals were at first divided in their views—M. Cailloux is believed to have opposed the inclusion of Communists on the ground that Hitler would object—but M. Daladier won the day for participation, provided the Centre also joined, by reminding his Party that they might soon have to die side by side in the trenches with Communists, and that they might as well begin working with them now. The Opposition Parties, however, with the exception of the small (Catholic) group of Popular Democrats, were adamant in face of M. Blum's appeals. In view of the Centre's refusal to join a Government in which the Left would be in the majority, the Radicals in turn decided—somewhat illogically—that they would participate only on condition that the Communists were excluded. Accordingly, as a *pis-aller*, M. Blum has been driven to form a Government much on the same lines as that which he constituted in June, 1936—a Radical-Socialist coalition "tolerated," without participation, by the Communists. M. Blum, wisely resisting Radical suggestions that M. Bonnet should be reinstated, has taken over the Finance portfolio himself. MM. Chautemps and Delbos stand down at their own request; M. Paul Boncour, whose influence it is difficult to estimate, becomes Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Blum's Problem

The new Cabinet may be described as a good second best; but its inherent weakness is obvious. In order to deal with a situation tantamount to "war preparedness," France needed a Government assured of sufficient all-party backing to put through a programme of "equal sacrifices" in the interests of national defence. For this purpose, to secure the support of a large section of the working class, the inclusion of M. Thorez was essential. Equally, M. Paul Reynaud's appointment to the Ministry of Finance would have been the one chance of winning the co-operation of the big bourgeois interests in defending the franc. As it is, if the urgent demands of rearmament require serious modification of the 40-hour week, M. Blum is exposed to the risk of trouble from the extreme Left. More dangerous still is the prospect of a renewed blackmail campaign from the *deux cent familles* who hold the power to wreck the currency and who seem as ready as ever to betray the Republic to Fascism if only they can undo the Front Populaire's social legislation. As is pointed out in our City columns, it is difficult to see how M. Blum can defend the franc from internal treachery without imposing exchange control. In that event the Radicals may once more bring his Ministry down, unless the international situation has so developed that M. Blum can broaden his coalition both to Right and Left.

Poland and Lithuania

A week ago a Polish gendarme was shot dead, in circumstances not accurately known, on the Lithuanian frontier. The Lithuanian Government has offered to participate in a joint committee of inquiry, but this offer has been refused in Warsaw. The Polish Government, which states that it takes a "far more serious view" of the gendarme's death than is realised in Lithuania, is reported to be utilising the incident as a pretext for demanding, first, guarantees for the Polish minorities in Lithuania, and secondly, the opening of the frontier which the Lithuanian Government has kept closed for eighteen years, ever since the Polish seizure of Vilna. Anti-Lithuanian demonstrations have been allowed by the authorities in Warsaw and elsewhere, and troops are massing on the frontier. Poland's attitude in the major European issue has so far been equivocal, but lately she has been leaning somewhat towards the Axis, and Colonel Beck has just visited Rome. It may be that she is now preparing simply to make a little hay of her own in the Baltic, while attention is distracted by developments in Austria and Spain. The possibility, however, cannot be excluded that cession of the Corridor to Germany might be offset, as a deal, by the Polish occupation of Lithuania, with Memel as the outlet to the sea.

Air Power and Defence

There is to be no inquiry into the progress of military aviation. The Prime Minister on Tuesday came stoutly to his colleague's rescue: Lord Swinton escapes, in effect, court-martial. Mr. Chamberlain's plea, that there was no case for an inquiry because the Cadman Committee (from whose purview military aviation was excluded) had not recommended one, was somewhat disingenuous; but the House as a whole was not prepared to press for the investigation of past short-comings and errors. It clearly preferred to hope that greater efficiency of administration and production is being, or will soon be, evolved—more especially now that the whole rearmament programme is being reviewed. Nevertheless, the Air Ministry did not escape damaging criticism in the course of the debate. Col. Muirhead, the Under-Secretary for Air, presented an optimistic picture of early difficulties

overcome and of satisfactory progress both in recruitment and equipment. But he had no convincing answer for critics who complained that Air Ministry orders and counter-orders had obstructed and exasperated manufacturers, that output from the "shadow" factories is likely to be far behind schedule in beginning, that our current production of machines is greatly below that of Germany, that we are deficient in long-range bombers of the most modern type and that R.A.F. accidents are disquietingly numerous. Given time, we shall no doubt build up an Air Force second to none; indeed, in their zeal for more rapid expansion, critics in and out of Parliament have probably underestimated our present fighting strength in the air. The most urgent need may well be to make up lee-way in our anti-aircraft defences, such as balloon barrages for London and other large cities, and to organise as effective a scheme as possible of civilian protection.

The Budget

The remarkable extent of last year's boom is very clearly illustrated by the present condition of the revenue. With two weeks and a half to go, Sir John Simon had already received by the beginning of this week a total revenue of £816 millions. This represents an increase of nearly £44 millions over last year's receipts, although an expansion of no more than £38 millions was contemplated in the Budget. Subject to uncertainty as to a repetition of last year's end-of-account windfall from Miscellaneous Receipts, it looks as though revenue may show a surplus of nearly £10 millions. Borrowings under the Defence Loans Act now amount to about £30 millions, out of a total of £80 millions expected a year ago. Unless the Chancellor has to draw up an actual war budget, he may be able to avoid major additions to taxation this year; for by no means the whole of last year's boom profits are reflected in the tax yield for the current financial year. In any case, if review of the rearmament programme now being undertaken leads to a great acceleration of expenditure, the odds are that the Government will finance the major part by an increase of projected borrowing. It would not be surprising to see increased duties on beer, motors and tea; but those who talk of a 6*s*. income tax lose sight of the fact that Mr. Chamberlain's Government is not pre-disposed to "soaking the rich," and that it will be chary of accentuating recession by higher direct taxation so long as the necessity can be postponed.

The Trade Unions and "Dilution."

If the Trade Unions are to be asked, as it appears they are, to modify their rules in order to speed up the output of armaments, especially aircraft, they will assuredly want to know what policies the further spurt in war preparation is meant to subserve. In 1915, when the Trade Unions entered into the Treasury Agreement and accepted "dilution of labour" for the period of the war, Great Britain had already been at war for a whole winter. The Trade Unions then insisted on the taxation and control of war profits as a condition of their acceptance, as well as on firm promises of the restoration of Trade Union customs after the war. They know now that even apparently very high taxation of "excess profits" is fully compatible with the making of enormous fortunes by war profiteers, and that "restoration" of customs once given up cannot ever be fully effective in face of the forces of technical change. They will, therefore, presumably want firmer guarantees than they asked for in 1915.

The Road Transport Dispute

The business of transporting goods by road is at present in the hands of an immense number of different firms, large and small, with interests and attitudes so diverse that they are represented by three, if not more, separate employers' associations of national pretensions. With some of these bodies the Transport Workers' Union has been able to fix up fairly satisfactory terms through the National Conciliation Board; but at least one of the national bodies has been standing out, and in addition there are a host of small operators unattached to any national organisation. The employers who are prepared to give decent conditions want these enforced on the trade as a whole; and the Government is considering legislation to establish compulsory minimum terms of employment. But in the meantime there is the danger of a national stoppage unless all the main bodies of organised employers can be induced to accept a common settlement. Mr. Bevin, in threatening strike action, has sought and received promises of help from the railway Trade Unions in order to prevent the diversion of goods to the railways if a stoppage takes place. But it seems likely that the dispute will in fact be settled by an undertaking from all the main groups of employers to operate a temporary settlement pending the establishment of a compulsory code of conditions by legislation.

The Films Bill

Against a background of bankrupt British producing companies, closed studios and unemployed technicians, the Cinematograph Films Bill is at last reaching its final stages. All attempts to embody in the measure the recommendation of the Moyne Committee—that the industry should be placed under the tutelage of an independent Film Commission—have failed. The cost test as a qualification for quota protection is still relied upon to eliminate the objectionable "quickie," and the House of Lords, in the committee stage, insisted on restoring next year's quota to 20 per cent. in the case both of renters and exhibitors—at the obvious risk of there being an insufficiency of up-to-date British films to enable exhibitors to discharge their obligations. A last minute amendment introduced by the Government in the Lords provides that an American renter who makes a film whose labour costs are £37,500 may count it as three for quota purposes. It seems doubtful whether this device will lead to the production in this country even under American auspices of big feature films calculated to appeal to the American market; and, if it does, the output will not be distinctively British. No effort has been made to achieve real reciprocity with America on an agreed basis, and in the one branch of the film industry in which we have achieved success—the making of the short documentary film—the quota protection is quite inadequate.

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THE INESCAPABLE FACTS

WHEN the historian comes to analyse the reasons for the collapse of European civilisation in the twentieth century, he will find nothing so difficult to explain as the part played by the British ruling class. For it needs no intelligence at all to see that the collapse of Europe involves that of the British Empire. At this eleventh hour when it may still just be conceivably possible to salvage our civilisation, the bulk of British Conservatives seem unconscious of facts which are really inescapable. Austria they had long accepted as necessarily falling within the sphere of the Reich. Here their attitude—and it has involved actual encouragement to Hitler from the British Foreign Minister—is intelligible. It did more credit to their hearts than to their heads. To-day they are aware that they have invited Hitler to make himself at one blow master of Vienna, the centre of communications and the key to power for the whole of South-eastern Europe. Already overnight the object for which ten million men lost their lives in the last war has been lost.

Their blindness about the Spanish war is much more extraordinary. A fantastic fear that the Spanish people might become what Hitler and Mussolini love to call Communists—they use the word to include the majority of French and British subjects—seems to have been mainly responsible for Conservative policy, which has been to collaborate in a Committee of Non-Intervention with the principal intervening Powers, while the most heroic efforts of the Spanish people were gradually worn down by the unlimited supply of men, munitions and aeroplanes from Germany and Italy. To-day, for the first time since November, 1936, the Spanish Government is in imminent danger of defeat. The reason is the same as it was then. No amount of courage, no sacrifice, no self-discipline—and the Spaniards have shown all three—can withstand an overwhelming mastery of the air. The British have stood idly by while the Fascist Powers have sunk the ships that have brought the Government reinforcements and supplies of aeroplanes. And this on high seas, always considered vital communications which the British navy is supposed to secure. During the last few weeks, with the influence of Mr. Eden removed and a clear hint to the dictators that Britain now had a Prime Minister who had no intention of thwarting their plans, limitless supplies have poured in from Germany and Italy. Do Conservatives still re-echo the phrase with which Sir Samuel Hoare first greeted Franco's rebellion as an "internal struggle in which we have no concern?" Do they still think that Germany and Italy are in Spain because of "Bolshevism," and not rather because (as Hitler himself has said) they want the mineral wealth of Spain, and because they want to dominate Gibraltar and end British power in the Mediterranean?

It is staggering that to-day when German is the most useful language for travel in parts of Franco's Spain, when whole regions of Spain are simply German and Italian colonies, there should still be British Conservatives naive enough to think that from a purely British point of view it does not matter who wins in Spain. Speaking from a strategic point of view, it is surely clear that an Italian and German victory in Spain renders Britain helpless; that Egypt, Palestine and the Suez Canal cannot be defended if our only way of approach through the Straits of Gibraltar is to sneak through "with lights out," as Sir Roger Keyes suggests. We doubt whether experts who tell us that it is only a few thousand miles longer to go round by the Cape, and that the Mediterranean does not really very much matter, will convince anyone. Nor do we believe that it will be possible in a few weeks' time for the most ardent British supporter of foreign Fascism to think that the loss of the Straits of Gibraltar is not important because of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's friendship with Mussolini. Of all the fantastic miscalculations of statesmanship, of all the pieces of class blindness that have destroyed European democracy, nothing has equalled Mr. Chamberlain's belief after the long history of trickery and deceit at the Non-Intervention Committee, that he was able to separate Germany and Italy by conversations, to bribe Germany with promises and to do a deal with Mussolini just at the moment when they wanted to keep Britain quiet while they completed the conquest of Spain and the dominance of Central and South Europe. To-morrow who can doubt that Mussolini will claim from Germany the price of compliance in Austria and that the price includes the extension of the Roman Empire over what has been the British Empire in the Mediterranean? It has been said that the British built an Empire in a fit of absent-mindedness; it will be said in the future that it has taken the Tory party to lose it, not so much from absence of mind as from absence of brains.

There are two, and only two, conceivable policies. To accept the first would be to make sense, though doubtful sense, of the destruction, mainly by Britain, of the League of Nations, which was the only instrument of permanent peace and security. We ventured once to put forward as the only possible explanation of Mr. Baldwin's policy, that he was using the Conservative dislike of the League of Nations to give up the British Empire without firing a shot. To-day, if Mr. Chamberlain would come forward and tell us that his policy was really one not only of isolation, but also of Little Englandism in which the Empire was to be given up because it could not be defended, and in which military defence was to be abandoned because war would totally end civilisation, we for our part should wholeheartedly support him. It would be a difficult part to play—it would involve a liquidation of British interests in the Far East, where Japan has been left to do as she wills, a surrender of the Near East and Mediterranean to Italy, a return of colonies as soon as Hitler cared to ask for them, the acceptance of a German navy as big as Hitler felt inclined to build, and the withdrawal of Britain from world affairs to the dimensions of a Power perhaps as politically important as Sweden. With the British population and demand for foreign foodstuffs, it would be a difficult change economically, even if it were possible psychologically. With a declining birth rate and the full use of modern methods of intensive food production, it is not an impossible conception if it were explained to the British public as the alternative to a desperate and catastrophic war. If that is what Mr. Chamberlain really desires, his only hope of achieving it is to say so at once; for it is contrary to the entire traditions and beliefs of the Conservative Party and, indeed, of the mass of British people, who are under the delusion that Britain is still a great Power in

the world, and who willingly spends hundreds of millions of pounds on a navy to defend its trade routes. This kind of isolationism sounds improbable. Lord Beaverbrook is scarcely easier to swallow. We let Austria go, we did nothing to hinder the Fascist attack in Spain; we might conceivably let Czechoslovakia go, and the whole of South Europe fall to Germany. Does anyone believe, however, that British Conservatives would let France go and the Channel ports become German without striking a blow, or does anyone imagine that for some reason or other the policy of *Mein Kampf* stops short at Austria, and that Hitler will be happy to forgo his promised revenge against France, and be scrupulously careful not to interfere with Britain, now included by Herr Ribbentrop as a Communist country? If so, Mr. Chamberlain should tell us that that is what he means; genuine isolationism might postpone war.

If we are right, however, in assuming that isolationism is so much wish-thinking, not seriously intended, then what does Mr. Chamberlain offer us? We have had declarations that the British Government intends to fight if necessary for the British Empire. If Spain falls into the hands of Germany and Italy, if the Mediterranean is a Fascist lake, if Central and Southern Europe are included in a vast Germany, with some 200 million disciplined and obedient inhabitants, how is Mr. Chamberlain going to defend the British Empire by conscription and air raid precautions and the rest of it? It seems unnecessary to labour the point. What is the war for which we are asked to prepare? Let us assume that in spite of internal difficulties, the U.S.S.R. is still to-day a strong and united military force and that Britain is compelled even against the will of the Chamberlain government to accept the U.S.S.R. as an ally. We are then to fight a war against a Germany which has at its disposal all the resources of the last war, the unimpeded use of the Rumanian oilfields and of all the granaries and raw materials of South-Eastern Europe; which also has as an ally the Italy which in the last war we quickly compelled to change alliances, but which, on this occasion, would be effectively guarded at Gibraltar, the vassal of Germany, to be richly rewarded with the plunder of British possessions. In this war the Mediterranean would be blocked to British shipping, while Japan, no longer an ally, would be busily engaged in mopping up the remains of British possessions in the Far East. It would be a war in which Germany, which nearly defeated the allies by the submarine campaign in 1917 when Britain dominated the seas, would have ideal submarine bases off the North Coast of Africa—Germany is already occupying Spanish Morocco; and finally, and perhaps most important of all, a war in which London is uniquely vulnerable to air attack from German aerodromes or from Dutch territory in German control. All the small States would have already rushed as they are rushing to-day to Germany to save their skins, and our only possible allies would be France and the U.S.S.R., with America, the decisive factor in the last war, certainly in isolation at the beginning and only coming in, if at all (after its many rebuffs from the National Government) with the greatest hesitation and tardiness. Looking at this picture, we ask Mr. Chamberlain why he should expect us to respect his judgment, accept him as Premier and permit his class to rule us any longer.

There would seem to be only one alternative policy for Britain; to declare clearly where she stands and what she will fight for. To-day everyone, except many Conservatives are becoming aware of this truly appalling prospect and see the disaster to Central and South Europe and in Spain and the imminent danger of general war that have come from the Ribbentrop conversations, and the projected talks with Mussolini, over which Mr. Eden resigned. Even Mr. Chamberlain must see that it is impertinent and ridiculous to continue to call his Government National and to remain in office calling for arms and more arms to replace, presumably, the large armies of these countries that were prepared to be our allies only a few months ago, and which are now being hastily put at Hitler's disposal because our recent friends saw that we intended to betray them and everyone else; no government has ever disarmed a country as fast as this National Government. No amount of rearming can itself make Britain strong enough for the impossible task of defence which will be set us if the Chamberlain government lasts another month.

Probably the best chance of preventing a war, perhaps finally destructive of Europe as a whole, and almost certainly ending in defeat for democracy and for Britain, is that close and immediate alliance of Powers which Mr. Churchill now demands with such eloquence and vigour in the House of Commons, and which we and other people not suffering from the astigmatism of Mr. Chamberlain and his friends have long been urging under various titles—first as the League of Nations, then, after Sir John Simon had done his worst, as the League of Progressive States within the League, and lastly, as a desperate and unhappy expedient, as the European alliance of the remaining free and non-aggressive states. Clearly if such an alliance held together and rebuilt as best it could a system of Collective Security—and to begin that only waits for a clear and unambiguous statement from a British Prime Minister—if it was made clear that British help for the victim of external aggression in Eastern Europe could be counted upon and if (and this is more important and urgent) immediate action concerted with the Blum government in France were taken to save both British interests and democracy in Spain, then it is possible and even probable that Germany would hesitate to take the plunge into the terrible and precarious adventure of war, and that Italy could still be checked by the threat of the British navy. In that case, there would still be a chance of peace, and conversations, talks about grievances, concessions and all the rest of it with the Fascist powers, would have some meaning other than blackmail.

But such a policy, which must be adopted immediately if it is not to be for ever too late, cannot be carried out by the Chamberlain government. No one believes in Mr. Chamberlain; his discredit and failure are hourly more obvious. Such a policy with the discipline, the conscription of wealth and of British manhood, which would be necessary, can only be put forward by a broadly based government which includes Mr. Eden, Mr. Churchill and the Labour and Liberal leaders. It is time the people of England told Mr. Chamberlain in unmistakable language that for a policy of connivance and encouragement to Fascism the British nation is not prepared for more taxation, for more conscription or for discipline, but that there is no sacrifice it is not prepared to undergo for a government which really intends to throw its weight on the side of democracy and against aggression, and therefore

possibly even at this eleventh hour may avert the overwhelming catastrophe that threatens the world. We ought to be clear about this if ever about anything in our lives: in the absence of such a statement and the formation of such a government it is suicidal to arm for a hopeless war for the remnants of the British Empire, and it is the duty of those who see clearly to refuse to join or help in any way those who seem set on betraying every worthy thing for which Britain has ever stood in the world.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

WHERE TO SAY "HALT"

IN form and in detail the procedure by which Austro-German union has been accomplished ranks high in the achievements of the super-gangsters of history. Frederick the Great might have smiled at it: Bismarck would have been shocked. Chancellor Schuschnigg, shortly before he went to Berchtesgaden, had discovered the whole Nazi plot in its first shape. Some Nazi figurehead, perhaps Von Papen, was to have been attacked or assassinated: for this the "Marxists" were to be blamed: rioting or fighting was then to break out: to prevent civil war between Germans, the army of the Reich was to march in. This plan was rapidly varied to suit the new circumstances. Dr. Schuschnigg himself supplied the pretext by announcing his plebiscite. That was a bold challenge—the first attempt of a small Power to resist Hitler by that sharp but constitutional practice which Hitler himself has so often adopted in his climb to power. He delivered this challenge before he had completed his deal with the outlawed Social-Democrats. He had not, and could not have got, the support of his Cabinet (which contained two of Hitler's men). The details—the haste, the lack of a register, the high age-limit, the framing of the question, the very dubious arrangements for casting a negative vote—these gave Hitler an excuse which made it unnecessary, as originally proposed, to immolate Von Papen or any other Nazi victim on the altar of the Fatherland. There followed the ultimatum from Berlin that deposed the unlucky Chancellor. Thereupon, the German army, already in position for its march, cleared the road for Hitler's triumphant entry into Vienna.

An action that may be decisive for the future of a Continent has been accomplished by brutal ill-faith. But we have to set it in a larger historical framework. It is the sequel to stupid arrangements made by the victors in 1919. In retrospect many now regret the failure to do then what a few suggested at the time. The Dual Monarchy ought not to have been "Balkanised." Political statehood for its component nationalities should have been combined, if possible, with a federal structure, or at least with economic unity. Failing this solution, the only wise and liberal course would have been to permit Austria to unite with Germany, as nine in ten of her citizens then desired. The League, in the years that followed, failed to redress the original wrong, because it never had, and has not now, workable provisions for revision. This defect and the original wrong, which was but one of many, has been avenged upon us all by the whips and scorpions of this Nazi scourge.

The tragedy is that the Union, which would once have been a natural and harmless solution, now comes about as part of a German plan for the military domination of Europe. It threatens a gracious civilisation that had in the main survived the mild clerical Fascism of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg. It threatens the Austrian Socialists with savage persecution, and the Jews of Vienna, who may number, according to Schleicher's definition of "non-Aryan," about 800,000 persons of a sub-human status. To undo what has been done we take to be impossible. The most that can now be done for Austria by persons, groups and governments, is to save individuals, such as Sigmund Freud and Fritz Werfel, whose lives are of value to civilisation, and to arrange, wherever they can, that exile is substituted for torture as the lot of the more uncompromising Socialists and Catholics.

What we have now to face, as realistic strategists, is the danger to the Czechs. They have a well-trained army, and they have fortified their frontiers. But their strategic position has been rendered incomparably more difficult since Austria became a German base. An advance from Leipzig over the mountains towards Prague would have been costly and slow, but a march over flat country from Linz to Pilsen would encounter no natural difficulties. The Czechs in fact would not attempt to hold this line, but retire to a prepared position drawn north from Bratislava. The new French Government, like the last, has reaffirmed its fidelity to its alliance, and the Russians have also confirmed their undertaking, which is to join the French, if they give aid. How much can either of them do? Both can send planes, and the lesson of war in Europe to-day is that an army can resist almost indefinitely as long as it has on its side something like an equality in the air. Both can bomb German towns. The Russians can aid the Czechs on land only if Rumania voluntarily opens a corridor or is compelled, on the Belgian model of 1914, to do so. On the other side, it is to be foreseen that Hungary will certainly, and Poland possibly, join in the attack to secure their share of the loot, for each has racial claims.

What, meanwhile, will be the British attitude? This is not a question for the remote future that can be left vague to-day. The emergency may arise, at a few hours' notice, a few weeks hence. Instinct, for what that may be worth, tells us that the delay is likely to be brief. The decision will have to be taken on a question from Paris: Will we back France, with ships, planes, credit and a minimum of men, if she fulfils her obligation to her alliance and the League Covenant, by going to war to succour the Czechs? If, when we are sounded, and there is still time for Germany to withdraw without loss of face, we say "No" (as we did when a similar question was asked over Spain) what will happen? It is just possible that a British negative would demobilise France and result in the butchery or surrender of the Czechs. But we have reason to distrust the calculations of those who rely on the French Right, even the French Fascists, compelling France to dishonour its word to the Czechs without British support. Our information is that the French general staff has made up its own mind and does not intend to repeat in the twentieth century the story of Sadowa and Sedan. In that case, whatever Government is in power in France, and whether Britain acts or not, an open attack on Czechoslovakia means war, and a war in which Britain cannot long remain neutral. For Britain cannot disinterest herself in the fall of France, and the control of the North Sea. The case for resistance is therefore dictated by prudence as well as by principle and, appalling as the risk of a declaration of British solidarity with France and Russia may sound, an unambiguous statement probably involves less risk than a repetition of the uncertainty of 1914.

What from the German point of view would a firm guarantee from Britain involve? British aid would mean primarily two things, Germany would know that she would be blockaded and forced to rely on her stocks of raw materials and foods, which are still at the moment wholly inadequate. Secondly, France, in grave financial difficulty, would have the credit of this country behind her. Known in advance, and publicly announced in advance, this decision probably (there is no certainty to-day) would compel Hitler to refrain from any armed attack on the Czechs. But if none the less he dared it, British leadership, acting with the moral and tactical advantage of supporting the Covenant of the League, could ensure an effective blockade, while the French and Russian armies, with the rights of passage secured by the Covenant, could do their part with higher hopes of victory.

What is in the way of a prompt and unambiguous declaration of British policy? Fear? Insular egoism? Lack of

imagination which cannot picture the consequences of a Nazi-Napoleonic era? All these things play a part, but once more conscience makes cowards of us. The Czech chapter of the war-settlement was no more perfect, to use mild words, than the rest. Was it defensible to include three and a half million Germans in this Slav State? It was not necessary, since the compact German areas lie almost entirely along the frontiers of Germany and Austria. A line could have been drawn without excessive difficulty that would have satisfied most of the Germans and sacrificed very few of the Czechs. True, as the soldiers said, it would have yielded a bad frontier from the standpoint of military defence. So it happened, there and elsewhere, that to avoid some risks of war, the statesmen made the causes of war. To-day these face us, and conscience stabs us in the back.

We would venture, then, while calling for a prompt and public promise of British support for France and the Czechs, to add a further suggestion. It is that London, Paris, Moscow and Prague should at once converse to discover the best way of removing this blot on the charter of the Czech Republic. Should it be by cession—a clean but drastic cure; or by cantonal autonomy, a scheme the Czechs have rejected? Or is there some third and better way? We do not dogmatise over details. It is enough to say that the Czechs, well-meaning, tolerant, and liberal to minorities though they have generally proved themselves to be, would be wiser at once to rid themselves of the terrible menace of disgruntled and now excited Germans within their frontiers. Till that is done, or until enough has been offered to satisfy reasonable neutrals, some element of hesitation will always qualify British support for this threatened democracy. It will not be attacked because it believes in civil rights and honest representative government. It will be attacked because it holds an alien population against its will. That admits of a remedy, and the remedy must be found.

Recent events have, we believe, cured everyone; even it may be Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, who hoped for peace from general negotiations with Berlin. Neither for loans nor for colonies will Berlin (and we would add Rome) turn aside from their major purposes. They mean, having got Austria and Abyssinia, to get Central Europe and the Mediterranean as well. The Axis aims, over the whole middle region of the Old World, at irresistible military power. It has nearly got it. If Western Civilisation means to make any stand, before all the strategical keys are in its enemies' hands, it must call a halt before Prague and Barcelona.

A LONDON DIARY

How far does Mr. Chamberlain still command the confidence of the Conservative Party in the House and—a point of even more immediate importance—how durable is the cohesion of the Cabinet? The question of a guarantee to Czechoslovakia is the crux. The Prime Minister, I gather, is being "worked on" assiduously by Lord Beaverbrook, whose opposition to any foreign commitment is as adamant as ever; and among the ranks of Conservative press proprietors Lord Rothermere and the Astors may be reckoned as "pro-Nazi," while Lord Camrose—now abroad—would probably support Mr. Chamberlain in any issue. I can scarcely believe that Joe Chamberlain's son wants real isolationism, which only makes sense as a way of giving up the Empire. What he would like to do, I am sure, is to preserve in relation to Spain and Central Europe a non-committal attitude or, at most, to make his half-promised declaration redefining British foreign policy in a form so ambiguous as to mean nothing. I doubt if he will get away with that. Apart from the possibility of his hand being forced by another German drive, France will press for a definite statement and the House of Commons is beginning to want to know where it stands.

* * *

Lobby opinion at the moment is difficult to define; the Parliamentary—particularly Conservative—atmosphere this week has been predominantly one of suddenly awakened, and therefore bewildered, panic. But the feeling is growing against a repetition of 1914 ambiguity. Three out of four Conservative M.P.s would vote, I am told, in favour of a pledge to support France if necessary on behalf of Czechoslovakia. Churchill's speech on Monday made a profound impression on the Tory benches; and if the Prime Minister clings to a policy so non-committal that it could be construed as giving *carte blanche* to German aggrandisement in Central Europe, the chances of an open Cabinet split, followed by the resignation of at least five Ministers, are much more probable than they were when Mr. Eden went. I do not confidently predict the immediate break-up of the Government; the crisis, the imminence of the Budget and the habits of party loyalty will reinforce the Tory machine's appeals for solidarity. But the fall of the present Administration is certainly on the cards. If so, would Mr. Chamberlain advise the King to invite Mr. Eden to form a broadly-based Government of National Union or exercise his prerogative and demand a Dissolution? The ensuing election would be fought on curiously confused issues, which might divide the Left, but would certainly split the Right beyond repair.

* * *

Mr. Chamberlain's reference to Czechoslovakia committed Britain to nothing. All he did was to repeat the terms of Göring's explicit promise that Germany had no aggressive intentions towards Czechoslovakia. Nobody regards these promises as worth much; how easily circumstances might change and make necessary the arrival of a few divisions to protect the Sudeten-Deutsch just as they were necessary to protect the Nazis in Austria. But there is one detail that I know to be true and that I wish the Prime Minister had told us. These reassurances about Czechoslovakia were, I understand, confirmed in a solemn conversation between Göring and the British Ambassador in Berlin. Sir Nevile Henderson read these promises over paragraph by paragraph to General Göring, who confirmed them on his solemn word as an officer and a gentleman.

* * *

To-day, Wednesday, there is another rumour, very likely, I think, to be true. Hitler is said to have an agreement with Hungary for a joint "revision of the treaties" at the expense both of Rumania and Czechoslovakia. That I've taken for granted for some months. But rumour now suggests that he will not wait but act at once, creating another *fait accompli* in Rumania and making the Czech position impossible. If I were Benes, in these circumstances, I would not fight. It means annihilation whether help reaches them or not. But I think the Czechs will fight. They know what a German hegemony is like, and they are a tough though small people. I remember a Czech nationalist saying to me one day in Prague: "Well, we've struggled for our existence against these two great peoples, the Germans and Hungarians, throughout our history; we won our liberty in the war after losing it for three centuries. If we have to fight for it again to-morrow we shall." This is a spirit one must respect, and which I do not think one will alter by rational suggestion that it is better to give in without fighting.

* * *

I was haunted all the week-end by the memory of the first chapters of *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*. I stayed in the same countryside and talked to young men and women very like the jolly crowd that Wells described arguing and playing hockey in August, 1914. Some of them had never taken politics seriously before, and they would have let this crisis pass, too, if Schuschnigg had let Hitler have Austria without fuss. But the naked display of force, the absence of hypocrisy profoundly shocked them. They suddenly discovered what Hitler is really like; the thunder of tanks and aeroplanes in Vienna was loud enough to wake them up in rural England. Britain, they had assumed, would somehow keep out of war. Just as in 1914 war is so foreign to the vital interests and

hopeful projects of civilised people and preparation for it so utterly destructive of all that matters in life that most of us have been quite unable to face it—either by really refusing to take part in it or by preparing for it. But one of my companions had relatives in Vienna, and another was a young man just of military age. He began by asking me why should we be bothered, even if Germany did take Czechoslovakia? I explained briefly why I feared that we should be concerned. He said, "Well, then, you ought to want us to go to war at once." After a little the choice seemed clear to him. "I would rather a war," he said, "than just lie down and let Hitler trample on us." "Yes," I said, "the difficulty is that the war may go on and on until everything in Europe is in ruins." And then we began the old argument about whether isolation was possible or whether a clear threat of our intention to come in might prevent or postpone it, as in 1914. A similar change had taken place in the village. A week ago when Mr. Park, the gardener, told me how big the walnut tree would be in ten years, I said that I scarcely counted on seeing it. He smiled and said, "If you are trying to frighten me about a war, I don't take much stock of that." But this week when I said, "What do you think of the news in the papers?" he said, "Looks to me like the fore-beginning of another war," and after that talked of how to get rid of buttercup weeds in the grass and of the habits of the frogs in the little pool at the bottom of the stream.

* * *

Then I talked to an enthusiastic member of the Peace Pledge Union. He gave me accounts of big and excited meetings all over the country, of the rebirth of George Lansbury as an orator, and of the realisation that he found amongst the mass of people that our present policies were absurd, and that we ought to offer to disarm and treat with Germany on that basis. Naturally this application of Christian principles appeals to non-political kindly people who only want peace, and if the risk in front of us were of our Government precipitating war, pacifists would be the most valuable people alive. But it is not like that, and I know that in self-defence all but pacifists from religious conviction will rush to arms. Unfortunately, in these days you don't go to the war; the war comes to you. It may not be difficult to go on being a pacifist right up till the time war breaks out; for the Government does not want an immense army, it wants only an immense number of aeroplanes, a small mechanised army and a huge navy, and to the accomplishment of that programme no amount of pacifism will make the slightest difference.

* * *

There is an excellent story going about of Lord Swinton piloting one of the new empire flying boats. It is said that after some manoeuvres he flew so low over Reading aerodrome that his companion, a young pilot, shouted a reminder that they were not in an aeroplane but must come down on the sea. A little later Lord Swinton made an excellent landing in the Channel. The young pilot, fearing that he had made a fool of himself in warning the great Minister of Air, apologised profusely. Lord Swinton said it did not matter, though he wondered how his companion could have thought him so foolish as to forget whether he was to land on the land or on the sea. "However," he said, "don't worry about that. All's well that ends well," and with that he opened the door and stepped out into the Channel.

* * *

This seems to me an unkind definition of a difference between Communists and Catholics, and I hardly expected to find it in the *Catholic Times*:

> If the inevitability of poverty could only be proved, one feels that the Communist would abandon his programme and the poor as well, whilst the Church would continue her good work, and go on loving the poor and uplifting them. The trouble with the Communist is precisely that he does not believe that poverty is inevitable. (He will not accept the verdict of history because he is an evolutionist.) Poverty for him is not in the nature of things at all, but is a material factor which can be abolished and ought to be.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Miss M. Rivers.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

Look at the beauty of your thighs, at the classic curves of your legs, as they taper and taper just as the stems of a flower.

There can be no self-deception between you and yourself when you are standing in the nude.

You see yourself as God made you. You can't help but be awed by the beauty of His work.—*Daily Mirror.*

Any little dog can be permitted to feed in its "Mother's" sitting- or dining-room if provided with a "nonsplash" feeding bowl. This is an attractive bowl fixed to a large cork mat. In the top left-hand corner is the dog's name and in the centre is a large picture of the dog painted by a well-known artist. Complete, the outfit is only 8*s.* 9*d.*—*Star.*

My husband and sister have been dead some years now, but their photos fall off the wall every time someone in the family dies.—Letter in *Sunday Pictorial.*

Aston Villa's further progress towards promotion was an antidote to the European scares.—*Birmingham Gazette.*

Remarkable scenes were witnessed at Linz, where great mass meetings awaited Hitler's arrival. Armoured cars rattled over the cobbled streets as 300 warplanes zoomed overhead.

When it was announced at one of the meetings that Mr. Ward Price, of the *Daily Mail*, had arrived cheering went on for nearly a minute. In broken German, Mr. Price congratulated Austria on her "hour of happiness."—*Reynold's News.*

I want you to realise that there is in this country a growth that is quite unnoticed—a system that has not yet been arrested. The growth of that system is undermining the health of the nation. It is the question of the co-educational school—not all of them, of course, but there is a pernicious work going on which we have been able to trace back to Moscow and Communism. There is a determined cancer of filth that is out to destroy the constructive elements of this country. Our children are going out into the world and may meet those from these schools. A mysterious movement of black magic is being exploited to bring down our country, and the godless movement, which says religion is not fashionable, is spreading. It is up to you to see that your M.P. is informed of what is going on.—"General" Flora Drummond, reported in *West Middlesex Gazette.*

"It is presumption on the part of humans to estimate whether Heaven is gaining or losing by a person's death," said Councillor Ayley at the Walton and Weybridge Council Meeting, when a recommendation of its Burial Grounds Committee was rejected. The committee had refused the wish of a widow for the inscription she desired on a memorial stone to her husband in Weybridge cemetery. The wording which led to the controversy was: "Our loss, Heaven's gain; one of the best the world contained."—*Evening Standard.*

GERMAN FRONTIER POLICY IN SCHLESWIG

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN DENMARK]

ON February 10th South-Jutland or North-Schleswig, that part of Denmark bordering on Germany and restored to Denmark after the war, celebrated the eighteenth anniversary of its day of reunion with the Motherland. All over the land meetings were held and speeches made, but the general tone, far from being one of pure joy, was tinged with sadness and apprehension. What, we may ask, was the reason?

Denmark still figures in the minds of outsiders, particularly perhaps of English people, as a sanctuary of peace, security and democracy. To a more intimate view, however, the idyllic nature of the picture tends to disappear. Nazi propa-

ganda supported by Nazi money, is loud and busy on both sides of the frontier. This fact, however, and its customary results, are accepted almost as routine happenings by the Danish press (and therefore also abroad), until some major incident occurs which causes the limelight to be turned for a moment on activities which at other times are more or less hidden under the surface. This was the case in January when an arms dump was discovered in the hands of the Nazi estate agent of a landed proprietor in North-Jutland, the latter himself being an ardent member of the Danish National Socialist Party. The affair brought other interesting facts to light. No farm labourer could obtain work on this estate unless he could prove membership of the Danish Nazi Party. The inhabitants of the surrounding country are not a little alarmed at the influences which find their centre in this estate.

The owner, Herr Juul, once a lieutenant in the Army, quite openly trains his twenty farm-hands as Storm-Troopers on the German model, and gives them daily drill in the courtyard of his manor. Hay forks and sticks are being used in place of rifles as up till now he has not dared to parade weapons in public. But the discovery of his private arsenal has aroused no particular surprise in North Jutland nor, indeed, anywhere else in Denmark. In the course of a recent law-suit (arising out of libellous attacks on members of the Government) the defendant remarked, with significant candour, that it was only natural there should be secret arms depots in North Jutland in readiness for the prospective peasants' rising. So confident was this patriot of his cause that he did not hesitate to add that the voting-paper could no longer be considered a sufficient weapon, and that in the near future it might be well to be able to recall the faces of certain police agents—evidently a hint at the excellent memory displayed by the German Nazis in 1933.

A particularly alarming feature of the increasing German activity is the struggle to secure landed estates on both sides of the frontier. There is, of course, a German minority North and a Danish minority South of the frontier. But whilst the Danes are satisfied with the frontier as it stands and try to avoid trouble, German frontier policy in Schleswig is pretty much the same as elsewhere. A two-fold activity has marked the past six months: suppression of publications which represent the Danish point of view, in particular the Danish minority paper *Der Schleswiger*, published in German at Flensborg, the capital of Schleswig; secondly a systematic and brutal campaign for replacing Danish small-holders both South and North of the frontier by reliable Nazis. The following is an example, one among many, which illustrates the nature of this land-campaign.

In the village of Stollig on the Danish side, a German widow owned a farm. She got into difficulties and her farm was acquired in the course of a forced public sale by a young farmer with Danish sympathies. This caused an outburst of real fury in Nazi circles. A frenzied campaign against the new owner ensued. His window-panes were smashed, the walls of his house covered with libellous inscriptions, the water of the farm well was poisoned. A Danish court convicted some of the offenders. This provoked still more violent propaganda. "There is nothing else for it," it was freely declared, "only these same methods" (i.e., those used at Stollig) "can bring us different conditions."

Meanwhile, everything is done to secure land from Danes living on the German side, and to transfer it to German nationals. A certain estate-agent, Vogelgesang by name, has achieved real notoriety by his successes in "Germanising" former Danish-owned land. It is easy enough for him to manipulate his Danish clients who mostly are poor devils, whereas his own purse is well-lined. He is said to have invested millions in Danish-owned land through his firm, the "*Kreditinstitut Vogelgesang*," which was established as early as 1926. A German pastor, when asked where all this money came from, blandly answered: "From the German people." The Copenhagen newspaper, *Socialdemokraten*, takes the view that Vogelgesang's funds are official or semi-official and mentions a certain Herr Rickmer who is known to have bought several big estates through this agency. Who is Herr Rickmer? He is said to be a German living in Switzerland and anxious to invest his money in landed property, in part through a firm of his own which bears a high-sounding French name. But in Denmark it is widely believed that he is a fictitious personage, and his funds simply are Government funds.

For a long time it has not only been impossible for Danes to acquire new land on the German side* but even to take over farms and other properties hitherto owned by Danes. Just at the time of the Stollig affair a Dane domiciled south of the frontier wished to cede his farm to a younger compatriot. This was refused by the German authorities, and a trustee ("Treuhänder") was appointed to look after his land. The owner is thus deprived of all control over his property, and even of the right to choose his own successor. And all the time the Nazis speak loudly of the "freedom and justice" which prevail in Schleswig! The usual tactics are of course followed by which the right hand does not know what the left is doing. In other words the Government or the higher Party officials, when approached on these issues, will always be able to prove that they have nothing to do with them, and that the local Party Office or some over-zealous subaltern, has acted on his own. The desired object however is always attained by the "arbitrary" decrees of some underling. Of this the school question provides another example.

Already in 1934 the Danish Minority schools had to record a grievous loss of pupils owing to Nazi influence. Parents are subject to ever increasing and systematic propaganda, backed by actual pressure to withdraw their children from the Minority schools. At Flensborg sixty-seven pupils of Danish schools have been registered for the German schools as the result of an announcement, "local" of course, amounting to an ultimatum, warning Danish parents that unless by the end of February their children's names were found on the German school register the family would make itself suspect of "political unreliability" and would have to face the consequences. It is the same game, though of course on a small scale, as was played in South Germany, with the parents who persisted in sending their children to denominational schools. Threats and promises alternate. The lower Party functionaries are employed to paint gloomy pictures of their children's future to those parents who will not give way to more gentle persuasion. These "*Blockwarte*" and "*Zellenwarte*" inform the parents that their boys and girls will find it impossible to get work of any description on leaving school; on the other hand, they are promised good places as apprentices if their parents will listen to reason. Then there are the allowances (the "social help") which, for families with numerous children, can reach a maximum of 2,100 Mark annually. Fathers applying for it are told they cannot expect anything so long as their children attend the Danish school. In several cases officials accompanied the intimidated parents to the Town Hall in order to make sure that the children were actually registered for the German school.

But this is not all. A worker's wife is told that she cannot expect the allowance unless she ceases to be a member of the Minority group; a young girl asking for a marriage-loan is instructed to give up her membership of all Danish institutions. These are not exceptions, but typical examples of policy. The leader-writer of a Jutland newspaper voiced a very general anxiety when he put the question: "Is it a systematic extermination of the Danish minority which we see in progress south of the frontier?"

A delegation of Minority spokesmen was recently sent to the *Gauleiter* (Provincial Party Leader) at Kiel, with the request that the collection of evidence, and decisions about the "political reliability" of individuals, should be left to the Danes themselves; further, that Party officials should be instructed as to the desirability of national propaganda being

* In any case all sale of land to foreigners is illegal in Germany while Denmark is not protected by law against purchase of land by foreigners.

dissociated with allocations of " social help." Large sections of the Danish population, said the Delegates, are feeling oppressed by the atmosphere of political insecurity created by the fact that " social help " is allocated in the main through the National-Socialist Party machinery, and its representatives keep minute records of each family and each child belonging to the Danish Minority. Needless to say the Delegation received no satisfaction.

EXPURGATING THE DICTIONARY

THE eminent Spanish broadcaster, General Queipo de Llano, was quoted the other day as having said: " We have struck the word pity out of our dictionary." I could not help thinking that, in performing this drastic operation on the dictionary, the General had done well. He had at least made a move in the right direction. At present the dictionary is cluttered up with all sorts of words that are of very little use except to sentimentalists, competitors in spelling bees, and solvers of crossword puzzles. So vast has the number of superfluous words become in English, indeed, that many people have given up the hope that this overloaded tongue will eventually become the universal language. It is because of this that Mr. C. K. Ogden, in recent years, has purged the English vocabulary of most of the words you find in Nuttall and provided the world with Basic English, which contains only words necessary to mutual understanding among ordinary modern men.

I have not the Basic English books by me at the moment, so that I do not know whether one of the words Mr Ogden has eliminated is " pity." If it is not, then to my mind Basic English contains one word too many for general needs. If the word itself is not obsolete, it denotes something that appears to be rapidly growing obsolete—" sympathy with suffering or distress," to quote one of the dictionaries, " compassion." This was at one time accounted a virtue, and was for a long time associated in the popular mind with the founder of the religion for which General Queipo de Llano has been so eloquently trying to save Spain. Compassion was once thought to be so beautiful a characteristic of human nature that a man or a woman could gain a reputation for sanctity by merely being compassionate. There was a charming saint whom everybody used to love chiefly because she took pity on caged birds, bought them and set them free. It was because he had " compassion on the multitude," it is said, that Christ himself performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes. And even in our own day Nansen seemed to most people to be noble above the common because of the compassionate spirit in which he devoted himself to the relief of suffering during the Russian famine.

As time goes on, however, we see more and more clearly that compassion, however charming in some respects, is a quality of day-dreamers rather than of practical men. And we have also abundant warnings of this both in the history and in the literature of the past. An undue proportion of compassionate men have been failures and, indeed, many of them have been liquidated at an early age, largely because they preferred a philosophy of pity to a philosophy of pitilessness. It looked for a time as though Abraham Lincoln, in spite of the fact that his moral fibre had been weakened by compassion, might live to show the world that compassion and success were not incompatible. But the laws of life cannot be flouted with impunity, and Lincoln died, a martyr to his unpractical softness of heart. If only he had recognised the biological necessity of pitilessness, he might easily have lived long enough to win an enduring reputation as the supreme scoundrel of his age.

It would be going too far, I agree, to claim that the pitiless man invariably escapes a violent death. But, at least, there is good reason for believing that the pitiless man has a greater capacity for survival than the compassionate man. You may say that the pitiless Iago did not live much longer than the pitiful Othello, but it cannot be denied that he survived him. He also achieved most of his immediate ends with an efficiency in which Othello was lacking. Of the two he was obviously the more practical and successful man. In the same way Richard III outlived all his victims. One touch of compassion, and he would never have been more than a king's uncle. The iron logic of pitilessness, however, led him to a throne and made him the immortal villain of a play by Shakespeare.

There have, of course, been instances of the failure of ruthlessness, but the practical man always forgets these. So much does he dread the enervating effects of compassion that he would rather take Nero himself than St. Francis as his model. If he invades a country, he feels that victory is already half-won when he boasts that he will leave the inhabitants nothing but their eyes to weep with. To say less would be to confess himself a milksop. Pitilessness is the prerogative of the superman, compassion of the slave.

Hence it is not surprising that General Queipo de Llano, a practical man with practical ends in view, has struck the word " pity " out of his dictionary. To do so may seem inconsistent with his profession of Christianity; but, after all, as has often been pointed out, Christianity is a religion that has to be restated anew in accordance with the needs of every new generation. A German some time ago revised the Ten Commandments in order to bring them into line with the Aryan faith, and there is much to be said for having a Bible in which modern man can really believe. How can an Aryan of the twentieth century believe in a Bible in which the heroes are nearly all Jews, and in which human beings are told to love one another, to return good for evil, and even to turn the other cheek? How can you expect an Aryan to love his neighbour if his neighbour is a Jew? It is apparently hard enough for an Aryan to love his neighbour even if his neighbour is a Christian. How much more honest, therefore, to cleanse the New Testament of its sentimental aphorisms and to revise it in accordance with the needs of the age of the concentration camp and the bomb!

In the same way, I think, the times call for the production of an honest dictionary, from which all words that have ceased to mean anything will be excluded. " Charity," of course, would have to go, for charity is akin to pity. St. Paul's phrase, " The greatest of these is charity," is clearly out of date over large parts of the surface of the world, and might appropriately be re-translated: " The greatest of these is hatred of Marxists." " Mercy " would also obviously have to be dropped from the dictionary: " terrorism," " intimidation," " bullying " are words much more necessary to the modern vocabulary. Then there is " freedom." What is the use of keeping in the dictionary a word that has merely the effect on many modern minds of a red rag on a bull? It is true that even dictators frequently make use of the word " freedom," but they do not mean by it what people used to mean by it. " Freedom " has come to mean " domination," so why not say " domination "? Nowadays, you are supposed to be free only if somebody—either at home or from abroad—conquers you and compels you to do as he likes. " Liberty " has come to mean simply the liberty to say " yes," and " equality " means little more than an equal right not to be allowed to know the truth. As for fraternity and brotherhood, these things have been restored to a Cain-and-Abel basis, which has altered the meaning of the words. Cain seems to be in the running for the leadership of the brotherhood of man. Mazzini and the dreamers of the nineteenth century would not have understood the phase in this sense. They failed, and more practical men have taken their places. The word should go.

Lovers of language need not be alarmed at the prospect of a somewhat diminished vocabulary. There will still be plenty of words left for the stylist. There will be " death," " destruction," " damnation," " disaster," and a host of admirably expressive words at the disposal of the Tacituses who will write the history of our times. " Beauty " may have to go, but " hideousness " is a word with more body in it. " Peace "

may disappear, but "catastrophe," it must be admitted, is more dramatic. "Kindness" and "goodwill," words almost medieval in their sentimentality, may have to be expunged, but it cannot be denied that in an increasingly Sadistic world there is very little need for them. We have a new poetry, new painting, new music and new politics to express the spirit of the new world. Why not also a new dictionary?

Hence I commend such exponents of the modern spirit as General Queipo de Llano for expunging many words that once meant much to the human race, but that seem now to mean less and less, from their vocabulary. What I find difficult to understand, however, is how the words came to mean so little. One would have thought that almost any statesman, aspiring to fame, would prefer making his fellow-creatures increasingly happy to making them increasingly miserable, feeding them to under-feeding them, exposing their children to fresh air and sunshine to exposing them to incendiary bombs, inciting them to enjoy themselves to inciting them to hate and kill, like a tribe of tomtom-maddened savages. Obviously, ninety-nine per cent. of human beings have themselves these old-fashioned preferences, and for their sake, perhaps, we should still keep unburned a few of the old-fashioned dictionaries with the old-fashioned words. Let General Queipo de Llano, therefore, compile his expurgated dictionary, and let the common man preserve his Concise Oxford in the hope of better times. Though foolish and incompetent and often cruel, he will, I think, survive General Queipo de Llano, and he will then need the old-fashioned dictionary to remind him of the many excellent things to which his fathers once paid honour and of that golden age—somewhat unduly alloyed, perhaps—of which they once dreamed.

Y. Y.

HANS LITTEN

HERE is one of the heroic stories of the German Terror—the story of Dr. Hans Litten, who lately "hanged himself" in Dachau Concentration Camp.

(Maybe you feel you cannot bear to read another word about such a subject; but read this brief record, for it concerns not only the death of one brave man, but also the life of a Germany now silenced, and still being tortured and done to death.)

This young lawyer, Rechtsanwalt Hans Litten, was a highly educated man, son of the Professor of Law in Königsberg University. He was not a Communist nor a member of any political party; indeed, he publicly criticised the Communists strongly. But in the troubled years before Hitler became Chancellor, when clashes between Nazis and workmen were frequent, Litten was active as a lawyer in defending accused Socialists and Communists and in presenting civil claims against Nazis who killed or injured their opponents. In one case, in March, 1931, he cross-examined Hitler himself, to prove that acts of violence were part of the Nazi Party's programme: in denying this, Hitler swore to the strict legality of his party programme, and repudiated contrary statements that had been made by Goebbels and others.

On the morning after the Reichstag fire, at the end of February, 1933, Litten was arrested in Göring's great round-up, and was sent to Spandau prison, without trial, charge or sentence. Thence he was taken, with Erich Mühsam and others, to Sonnenburg Concentration Camp; he was fearfully man-handled on the way, and suffered further injuries in the camp, so that it was doubtful whether he would live. On April 24th, a Nazi officer inspecting the camp had the compassion and courage to carry him back to Spandau. I have before me a sworn account of his condition at this time, with his eyesight, hearing and memory damaged, and other injuries.

At the end of June, 1933, the Gestapo came to interrogate him, threatening renewal of such conditions as he "would still remember" after Sonnenburg if he did not "confess" that a client of his, whose acquittal he had secured in the famous Felseneck trial of 1932 and in whose innocence he believed, was guilty. Fearing that he would break down under torture, Litten wrote to the Gestapo, disavowing anything that he might afterwards be forced to sign. On August 10th the Gestapo men returned, took him to Berlin, and there ill-treated him. Two days later the Berlin press reported that "Litten confesses his complicity in the Felseneck case." He managed to smuggle out a message—"Accusation false, extorted; I recall it." He wrote to the Gestapo and public prosecutor, repudiating the forced "confession," and then cut his arteries and took poison in an attempt to kill himself. The Nazis nursed him back to life, holding that the State had an interest in forcing him to betray his clients which over-rode a lawyer's professional duty.

In October, when he was moved to Brandenburg Camp, he was still weak and sick, but again he was ill-treated and wounded with a bayonet. In February, 1934, he went to Papenburg Camp, where he was put to work on the fenland. He fainted, and a turf-cart ran over him, breaking one leg and injuring both. When he reached Lichtenburg Camp in August he was still crippled and in continual pain.

In 1936, after various representations had been made on his behalf by prominent people in England, conditions improved and he was allowed books and writing. But towards the end of 1937 or earlier the ill-treatment was renewed, his books and papers were taken away, and his friends became afraid that he was being pressed to commit suicide in the dreaded Dachau Camp to which he had been shifted.

The appeals from England included an impressive memorial signed by members of both branches of the legal profession, emphasising the lawyer's duty to respect the confidence of his clients. Every effort was made, by special journeys to Germany and otherwise, to ensure that these private requests for mercy and justice should receive full consideration. Finally, at the end of 1937, it was decided to publish the facts, in the hope that exposure might at least serve to save Litten's life. A statement was drafted, and then held back at the last moment, pending one more appeal through Herr von Ribbentrop. More delay, and then a blank negative. So the story was to be published, in defence of a living man. But just before it reached the printer news came of Litten's death. The prison authorities in Dachau simply report that he "hanged himself."

Many another has hanged himself, under compulsion, in that dreadful place. Beimle, a Communist deputy of the Reichstag, who escaped from Dachau in the autumn of 1933, has described how he and others were repeatedly told that they were expected to kill themselves, were given leather straps or strips of blanket to do it with, and were beaten for half an hour periodically throughout the day and every day.

To-day, in Hitler's and Himmler's Germany, the relatives of a prisoner or a dead man are liable to imprisonment as hostages in order to keep the German people ignorant of the facts of the terror. In Litten's case, the facts are published in this country despite these risks: but few amongst the kindly German people will have a chance to read them. In the world which still ranks certain claims above the claim of the State, Litten's name, like Niemöller's, will be gratefully remembered: but in the Germany for which Hitler cannot speak the death of Litten can only be whispered, bitterly.

W. ARNOLD-FORSTER

Correspondence

OUR DAFT IMPERIALISTS

SIR,—A little over a year ago, when I was spending a few days in Gibraltar, I found the naval and military authorities there enthusiastic over Franco and giving him every assistance possible. The heavy German guns which had been mounted on the Straits called up no misgivings. Italian aeroplanes flew over the forbidden area of the Rock. Spaniards responsible for the hundreds of executions that had taken place just over the border came into lunch every day and were received in society, whilst Englishmen

who favoured the other side were cut in the street. When I ventured to point out that the Spanish Fascist programme included the domination of the Straits and the conquest of French Morocco, I was told that General Franco was not a Fascist but a gentleman who played golf and that in the next war we should certainly be fighting upon the German side against the French. So strong was this feeling that an American journalist said to me: "You English will never be able to go to war with Germany because your admirals will take your fleet over to Hitler."

Last summer I had a conversation about Spain with someone in the Foreign Office. "The Spanish psychology is this," he said. "They hate people who help them and only admire those who keep out of their affairs. Whichever side wins in the Spanish war it is certain that the English are going to be immensely popular." As I happen to have lived in Spain for some twelve years and know the enthusiasm which the Spanish Right have always felt for German militarism, I could not agree to this. But my interlocutor was unmovable. What Señor Madariaga had said must be true.

Three months ago I met a young naval captain interested in strategy. "A base in the Levant is very important to us," he said. "We couldn't possibly afford to give up the Haifa pipeline." "But if Spain were hostile," I said, "the Straits of Gibraltar would be closed to us." "Oh, so you're one of those people who think we ought to support the Reds," he answered. "I don't agree with you. As soon as this war is over Franco will be eating out of our hand to get a loan."

Last week I met a man who professed to be in Mr. Chamberlain's counsels. "Of course," he said, "if Musso wants to do business, then we shall start on the new base at Cyprus. He won't like that." "And Spain?" I asked. "So long as the Spanish war ends quickly," he answered, "I can't see that it matters who wins. But it is having a very unsettling effect on Europe and we want it to finish as soon as possible."

Yesterday I met an old friend who calls himself a Liberal. "Spain?" he said. "You have a bee in the bonnet about that country. Of course we none of us like Franco, but what concern is it of ours who wins the Spanish war? The great thing now is to rearm."

Personally speaking, I hope to get off to America this summer. I hope I am as patriotic as most people, but a country where the governing classes have lost all sense for reality is not defensible. Why stay to take part in a war which is lost before it begins?

CASSANDRUS

AMERICA AND MR. CHAMBERLAIN

SIR,—British foreign policy seems to have passed beyond the crossroads, and all we may expect now is more clarity as to whither it is going and what it is facing. But it seems, in one important sense, at any rate, still to be steeped in ambiguity. Many official and semi-official pronouncements, as well as many private views, on British foreign policy have in recent times linked together two general wishes. They have expressed a wish for some "bargain" which might ease the tension in Europe; and, in, a vague way, they have called for a closer tie with the United States. The one is a wish to lay the irksome but passing nightmare of dictatorial aggressions; the other is a deep-felt, almost instinctive, aspiration for a lasting standard-bearing partnership between the two kindred democracies.

I will say nothing here on the merits of either wish. But what apparently needs to be said is that they cannot be satisfied together and by the same policy. When spokesmen for the opinion now ruling in England, men of position and experience, pray in one and the same breath for the two gifts, they show such inveterate lack of understanding of where America stands that it is no wonder that sentiment and policy in the two countries are drifting rapidly apart.

Outside the obligations involved in the Monroe Doctrine, America is deliberately liquidating every external commitment. It looks as if she may soon recognise no specific external interest that might involve her in military action abroad. The kind of economic or strategic interest which to England may be vital, America seems willing, at need, to forfeit. No common ground will be found on that basis, if England should be in need, that might bring America out of her isolation.

But it would be grievous error to read in that the workings of a "sacred egoism." The interest shown generally in international ideas and problems—whether measured by the number of chairs of international relations or student activities in that field, or by the innumerable "forums" and conferences and lectures on foreign affairs, etc.—has no parallel anywhere else; and I venture to say that nowhere else can be found so much latent generosity of sentiment readily moved and enlisted by an appeal to ideal principles. It was because he consistently based his policy on such appeals, and not on any claims of practical interest, that when he could keep the peace no longer President Wilson was able to gather such devoted support behind him. The lesson is clear for all to read in Mr. Ray Stannard Baker's latest volume, and there is page after page of it; as in the President's letter to Senator Stone, saying that to give in to international abuses "would be a deliberate abdication of our hitherto proud position as spokesmen, even amidst the turmoil of war, for the law and the right." And also there he continues in words that might have been written for our own problem:

> It is important to reflect that if in this instance we allowed expediency to take the place of principle, the door would inevitably be opened to still further concessions. Once accept a single abatement of right and many other humiliations would certainly follow, and the whole fine fabric of international law might crumble under our hands piece by piece. What we are contending for in this matter is of the very essence of the things that have made America a sovereign nation.

Because at Versailles the "very essence of things" was smothered in the scramble for spoils, American sentiment recoiled and repudiated the League. Ever since a factor that one meets at every step is a sullen suspicion of British diplomacy, astonishingly widespread and obdurate. Not because people here think it to be worse than others, but because they fear it is no better. And that, as it happens, is decisive for American opinion. There is no other people with whom Americans, in the mass, feel a familiar and reliable community of outlook and intention. England is the only country which could partner America into a genuine international system. Sever that bond of confidence, and American opinion and policy relapse into isolation. It was severed at Versailles, and American sentiment drew back from the League which it had sponsored. Sever it now, and the interest in international co-operation which President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull have gradually laboured to revive will be buried for a generation or more. We shall for a second time within a short but critical span of history ourselves have thwarted those American leaders who, out of love for peace and for progress, earnestly tried to join hands with us. Our choice is, so to speak, their fate. It matters not with whom we consort; but it matters vitally on what basis we do so. Should British statesmanship stand by its traditional principles—by that "courageous promulgation of great historical truths" for which Disraeli called—American sentiment will as surely stand by us. But let us choose expediency at the cost of international right and principles, and we shall render even the most friendly of American leaders impotent to bring America to our side in the international cause. As far as the great goal of co-operation with America is concerned, the lesson is contained in the passage I have quoted from President Wilson; and the choice we have to make is well characterised in the kindred view which a great Conservative leader expressed long ago:

> "It is always perilous to adopt expediency as a guide," wrote Disraeli, "but the choice may be sometimes imperative. These statesmen, however, took expediency for their director, when principle would have given them all that expediency ensured, and much more."

Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey. D. MITRANY

PACIFISTS AND GERMANY

SIR,—The events of the past week are a grim example of the sins of the fathers being visited on the children. Before condemning Hitler out of hand for his brutal display of *realpolitik*, it would be as well for the people of the "peaceful" countries to examine their own responsibility for this bloodless conquest which has so shocked their consciences. Mr. Chamberlain stated on Monday that his Government's objection was not to the union of Germany and Austria, but to the method by which that union was achieved. If this were so, how is it that the Allied nations who are the dominating influence in the League, have for the past 20 years consistently opposed the union of the two countries, when it could have been carried out in a peaceable manner to the mutual satisfaction of both peoples?

In spite of Wilson's tenth point which guaranteed the Austrian people freedom for autonomous development, we laid it down in the Treaty of St. Germain that Austria should "abstain from any act which might directly or indirectly or by any means what-

ever compromise her independence." Independence for Austria meant starvation for Vienna, and in 1920 Vienna starved. In 1921 Tyrol, Salzburg and Styria voted for union with Germany, and were snubbed by the Allies for their pains; and when in the slump of 1931, Brüning suggested a customs union with Austria, France forbade it on the grounds that it would be a contravention of the Peace Treaties. Seven years later the union has been achieved, and we must admit the validity of the German Government's rejection of our protest on the ground that it was "20 years too late."

Of the future, no one can speak with certainty. When or how Czechoslovakia's turn will come, is at present unpredictable. But the occupation of Austria should teach us a greater lesson in the technique of modern warfare than the wars of Spain, China and Abyssinia together. Granted that there was never any question of resistance, the method employed was nevertheless essentially military. Any attempt to prevent the occupation from outside would have meant a war in which the defended country would probably have fought against the defenders. The British Government is at present using the German action as a scare to frighten this country into increased rearmament, to stimulate recruiting for A.R.P., and to make us believe in the necessity of conscription. Those who support Collective Security as a method of defending freedom and democracy must now realise that in our effort to become stronger than the dictatorships our own democracy must perish. In invading Austria, Germany broke fifteen treaties and obligations in as many hours, tore up a constitution and produced a new one overnight. Yet supporters of Collective Security are now urging us to reaffirm our intention of maintaining the sanctity of treaties. If we pursue such an idealistic policy we shall become engaged in a war which we shall be bound to lose. If we try to oppose Fascism on its own ground and at the same time retain a democratic domestic and foreign policy, Hitler and Mussolini will laugh in our face and beat us every time. The peaceful war-makers must make up their minds. If they are to beat Hitler, they must adopt his methods. They must say goodbye to democracy and turn the country into a vast military machine. They must impose conscription, censor the press, and close down the P.P.U., and they must regard treaties and obligations as scraps of paper to be torn up the moment they become inconvenient. In fact, if they want to do the job thoroughly, they had better declare war on Germany now before her position becomes any stronger.

It is the parting of the ways. Either we are for peace or against it. And if we are for peace, then our methods must be peaceful. We must do now what we failed to do at Versailles—recognise the right of peoples of all countries to an equal share in the wealth of the world. We must stop hating Fascism and try to understand it instead. If it means the loss of our favourite *bête noire* and the swallowing of our dignity and prestige, then it is our fault for leaving it too late. It is a matter of the utmost urgency, for every moment makes the division of the world into two armed camps more complete. It is timely that at this very moment the Peace Pledge Union is launching a manifesto outlining what is now clearly the only alternative to war. The policy of military alliances and boycotts is a perpetuation of the very causes which have produced the militarism we are trying to oppose. It is only by the method of reconciliation and appeasement that we can break down the barriers which are dividing the world and be able logically and consistently to resist the increasing militarisation which the rearmament of the country is necessitating.

The Peace Pledge Union, NIGEL SPOTTISWOODE
96 Regent Street, London, W.1.

POETRY AND MASS OBSERVATION

SIR,—About a year ago to-day I stood in a field near the village of Morata near Madrid, where there were a considerable number of the dead. They lay quite still; they did not eat fish and chips, discuss betting pools, back horses, look at girls crossing roads, tap the ends of cigarettes before lighting them, whistle in public lavatories, or do any of the things that Mass Observers write down in their note-books. I doubt whether Messrs. Tom Harrisson and Charles Madge, if they had been there, would have noticed them, since, in their passion for the explicit, there seem to be several implicit phenomena which they do not remark. If they had noticed them, they would have had nothing to report.

Thousands of people are being killed every day in two large wars. Millions were killed in the Great War: it looks as if millions more will soon be killed in a second World War.

I sympathise with the aims of Mass Observers, but it seems to me that they are somewhat restricted in space and time. A certain insularity or even regionalism (since there are signs of competition between the eccentricities of Blackheath and Bolton) seems to confine the observers not only to a restricted place but also to the short-range preoccupations of the single unit of time, the day, even the minute.

Mass Observers may be right thus to circumscribe the area of their observations. But do any number of "scientific" statistics about fried fish shops prove that poets, in concerning themselves with such problems as death and the will of contemporary men to kill or be killed, are "unrealistic"? Surely the poets take a longer and wider view, longer because they are concerned with the history of Western Civilisation, wider because the interests of their culture extend over the whole world. If you take a period of thirty years, say from 1914 to 1944, and ask whether the odds are in favour of a majority of Europeans during this period being alive or dead, surely mass-observable statistics would prove that the odds are overwhelmingly in favour of death and probably a violent one for most people?

11 Queens Mansions, W.6. STEPHEN SPENDER

HUNGARY AND MR. HUXLEY

SIR,—Mr. Aldous Huxley in his last book, *Ends and Means* (p. 147), quotes as an instance of successful non-violent resistance and non-co-operation the long campaign conducted by the Hungarians under Deák in 1867.

> It is significant (he adds) that the name of Kossuth the leader of the violent Hungarian revolution of 1848 was, and still is, far better known than that of Deák. Kossuth was an ambitious, power-loving militarist, who completely failed to liberate his country. Deák refused political power and personal distinction, was unshakably a pacifist, and without shedding blood compelled the Austrian Government to restore the Hungarian constitution.

Mr. Huxley, I am afraid, is mistaken in various points of this quotation. It is true that Deák shed no blood in 1867, but Bismarck and Moltke did it for him in 1866 because without the Austrian defeat at Sadowa the gradually weakening non-co-operation of the Magyar ruling class would have been hardly successful. Kossuth's name is perhaps more familiar in England than Deák's, but certainly not on account of the former's militarism. When Kossuth in 1851 visited England and in 1852 the U.S. not only his wonderful English oratory won him the hearts of the population, but moreover his reputation of being the leader of European democracy with Ledru-Rollin and Mazzini in the early fifties assured his name more durability in England than the name of Deák whose political activity was confined to the Austrian Empire.

Still greater is the mistake Mr. Huxley is making when he characterises Kossuth as an outstanding militarist. When, at the instigation of the Austrian Court, the Croatian army led by the Banus Jellachich attacked the legitimate Hungarian Government Kossuth raised an army to defend the liberal achievements peacefully won in April, 1848. He was certainly no militarist. As he said in one of his speeches delivered in America: "I am a man of peace. God knows how I love peace. But I hope I shall never be such a coward as to mistake oppression for peace."

This, by the way, reminds me that Mr. Huxley in his admirable book forgot to point out how he hopes to start the movement for "massive non-co-operation and civil disobedience" in Germany or Italy, and, further, whether he believes that the organisation of non-violent methods in England would really restrain Herr Hitler from landing on the British shore or Signor Mussolini from planting the Fascist emblem in India. Like Mr. Huxley I am all for non-violence, for abolishing fire arms, bombing planes and men o' war, but meanwhile walking in a jungle I still feel safer with a rifle on my shoulder and a revolver in my belt.

Budapest. R. VAMBÉRY

OUR JUSTICES

SIR,—Here is an even more disgraceful case of magisterial ineptitude. A boy of nineteen, a certified mental defective on licence from an institution, eluded the care of his mother, arrived in due course in a workhouse, absconded therefrom and was sentenced, again, to fourteen days' hard labour. The boy's mental state should have been apparent to a village constable across the street. Nevertheless, not only was he sentenced but actually served the sentence before he was returned to the institution from which he was absent on licence. Can official stupidity do worse?

49B, Roland Gardens, HELEN M. KEYNES
London, S.W.7.

Miscellany

"KING LEAR" AT CAMBRIDGE

King Lear might be called the plainest, the most comprehensibly sad of the Shakespearean tragedies. It starts at the level of the ordinary heart and eye. *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*, for instance, start at what is already a certain altitude of passion or intellect; they are based, like peaks, above the foothills of common experience; a special air is breathed from the moment the curtain rises; the characters have inherited tragic stature—we do not watch them attain it. Unless the mind is keyed up from the very start, unless ordinary terms and measures have been discarded, the tragedy may be perceived rather than felt. But *King Lear* opens upon a situation that (like an Old Testament story or a newspaper paragraph) engages interest directly, invites a naive moral judgment and involves the heart. The figures are, at the outset, hardly more than life-size; one does not have to stand back to take them in. Throughout the opening movement of the play, these figures are comprehensible in domestic terms. Though, as characters, they are simplified for their dramatic purpose, having each been pared down to a few elements, these elements are so rendered as to make the characters more immediately sympathetic or antipathetic than the characters in any other tragedy. Their behaviour, their action upon each other excites a strong personal feeling in the onlooker. Pathos is driven in.

This feeling of closeness to the characters in *King Lear* is essential, if the tragedy is to operate. The point of departure—the smiling kingdom, the court, the two families professedly ruled by love—must be felt in order to get, later, the sense of annihilation, of being outcast. All this Lear abandons—why, and for what? In his old age, because of his old age, he abandons power for feeling: the simple and proud act becomes an act of extravagance. By it he applies a test to what he does not suspect. This has to be watched, before it is fully felt—watched as by Kent, the foreseeing onlooker. Before the fatal transaction is completed, the terror has begun to kindle gradually: the parallel tragedy of Gloucester (*his* misinvestment, in his bastard Edmund) mounts at about the same rate. This love of love in the old, this need to celebrate the affections, to re-inherit life, this wilfully exposed heart, this recoil from what seems the insufficient fire—in Cordelia, in Edgar—must appear in the first scenes, still fairly quietly signalised in Lear's imperiousness, Gloucester's credulity. With an abandon more complete and fatal than the abandon in any sexual passion, Lear and Gloucester offer themselves to the ruthlessness of Lear's elder daughters, of Gloucester's bastard. These two victims believe that they are commending themselves to nature. Actually, nature has her proprieties; she stands back—as Cordelia stands back—from the extravagant demand. This demand, which seems to Lear to be inherent in nature, only extravagance, with interest behind it, meets. Falsely and momentarily satisfied, Lear rejects Cordelia as insufficient, Gloucester is turned against his more coldly begotten son.

Feeling cannot subsist on falseness: betrayal follows. The play turns on this axis of betrayal, and on one implicit question—what is the *nature* of nature? What (in man) are nature's properties? What is its moral colour? Is nature a sound ruling, or is it anarchy? Is nature in the heart, or in the heat of the blood? Is nature the force outside man, his anti-human ally, the force behind his begetting, the patron, the referee? What is natural, what is unnatural?

The moral position of nature in *King Lear* is different in regard to each of the characters. Edgar, the bastard, says: "Thou, Nature, art my goddess." Gloucester says: "Nature finds herself scourged. . . . Love cools, friendships fall off, brothers divide. . . ." Lear says unkindness "wrenched my frame of nature from its fixed place," and hopes any child of the cruel Goneril's may be "a thwart disnatured torment to her." He asks: "Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?" Regan reproves Lear: "O, sir! you are old; Nature in you stands on the very verge of her confine: you should be ruled and led. . . ." Albany turns on Goneril for her treatment of Lear: "I fear your disposition: that nature, which contemns its origin, cannot be border'd certain in itself. . . ."

The Fool is the line of reason ruled through the play. He succeeds Cordelia as the impartial voice, heard through the mounting quarrels, through the Heath scenes with their orchestration of storm and madness. Madness supplies the august and terrible distance in which Lear's figure at once recedes and towers. Feigned madness transports Edgar; he has been a plain character; his application to madness seems to open a door through which another self rushes: Poor Tom is a speaker behind his reason, a speaker who had been waiting while Edgar reasoned and vacillated. Tom's is the free speech of disassociation, Lear's the constricted speech of torture. Gloucester, blind, answers Lear, mad, with the voice of someone disorientated by the loss of a sense. Throughout the middle scenes—the Heath scenes, the mad scenes—these figures are driven, obliterated as though by the storm: their voices come from a distance.

Towards the end of Act IV, the figures begin to come into closer view again. It is a terrible morning after the storm, but morning. Goneril, Regan, Edmund intrigue, murder, but there are no more daemons. Lear wakes to Cordelia's presence. The unnatural sinners are extinguished, leaving Kent and Albany. The stage is quiet when Lear approaches the audience, Cordelia dead in his arms, with his "Howl, howl, howl, howl!" The extreme quiet, while the looking-glass does not mist, the feather does not stir, makes sadness conclusive—Cordelia's death vindicates nothing; it is a total loss, the answer to a question that never should have been asked.

All this appeared with its full force when, last week, at the Arts Theatre at Cambridge, the Marlowe Society and the A.D.C. presented *King Lear* in its entirety. The tragedy could not have been more fully realised, or played with greater lucidity. The anonymous and impersonal actors seemed to be saturated not only in their own parts but in the entire play. The acting was vital: a good deal of natural vigour had been schooled, though not schooled out of existence—the effect of this was that there were no obvious accents, no *tours de force*. Thus, these performances did *King Lear* a rare service: they offered an unobstructed channel for the rush of the play. Too often, the natural and imperative rhythm has been tampered with; the scenes have been rearranged—at Cambridge, they were played in their written order, and in this order their power is cumulative.

The movements and the grouping were excellent—remarkable in the Heath scenes, so easily incoherent, and in the final scene, with its pattern of static figures. Memorable also was blind Gloucester, with Edgar, where there was no cliff. The producer should be praised for his use of action—used to heighten and point a moment, never used distractingly. He also taught the actors to make their stillness significant, to make their silences tell, and to bring out movement by contrast. Not a scene opened or a figure entered without effect—and thus, in spite of the unromanticised playing, no passage was abstract or monotonous. *King Lear* must be an ordeal—to produce, to act or to see. Here we had both its height and its tenderness.

ELIZABETH BOWEN

THE MOVIES

"Double Crime sur la Ligne Maginot," at the Academy.
"Bank Holiday," at the Gaumont.
"The Goldwyn Follies," at the Odeon.
"Ramuntcho," at the Film Society.

IT is not the business of film criticism to speculate on the motives which have led France to choose this moment to display to the world the closely guarded secrets of the Maginot

Line. In the new film at the Academy, its ostensible function is to provide the background to an exciting spy story. Its military importance is alluded to in a pregnant scrap of dialogue between two French officers—and then apparently neglected. But this fantastic 200-mile subterranean monument to European folly is the theatre of the entire action, much of the film was actually photographed there, and it reaches us with the Sanction of the French Ministry of War. Form what conclusions you will.

As a setting for crime and espionage the Ligne is supremely effective—and at times remarkably unnerving. Tunnels and secret passages we all enjoy; concealed shafts descending from the middle of bushes and periscopes through which the prosaic-looking countryside can be safely observed from below appeal to a strain of schoolboy heroics dormant in everybody. But suddenly an obscene tank waddles and shambles its way along the unending corridors, iron gates swing shut with merciless precision, the lights fail, we hear the dead reverberation of innumerable marching boots; and it is no longer the breeze of gallant adventure that stirs our nerves, but a gust of claustrophobic nightmare beside which Kafka seems, for the moment, as realistic as Arnold Bennett.

But the film is a French one, and the blessed sanity of the French attitude to life peeps through the horrors of militarism and the sensational complications of the plot. Human personality is respected, discussed, appreciated; early scenes display the national talent for social comedy. Even the military murder, when it comes, is investigated, to our surprise, by a civilian official: a character to whom Pierre Risch gives so novel a blend of excitable self-importance and genuine efficiency that he becomes no mere figure in the plot, but a real person. As he discusses the crime with his assistant, over the dinner table, you know that he will not forget for a moment the quality of the dinner itself; his plump bottle of red wine re-establishes the claim of humanity. The acting is throughout good: as the suspected officer Bruchot, Victor Francen gives a performance of great solidity and distinction. Though its subject does not allow it to compete artistically with the best of the recent French films, *Double Crime sur la Ligne Maginot* is well worth seeing, quite apart from the unusual interest of its setting.

Bank Holiday, now drawing to the end of its week at the Gaumont, partly deserves the favourable criticism it has received. An English film, ably directed by Carol Reed, it is notable for the authenticity of its scenes of jostling holiday-makers at the station and on the beach, and for a charming performance by Margaret Lockwood as the heroine, a hospital nurse. To have conveyed to the commercial screen some part at least of the everyday life of the English masses is a rare achievement, but one that must not blind us to faults we should never overlook in a Hollywood product. There are several, but they all boil down to that bane of most English movies—incongruity. Of course I do not complain of the mixture of tragedy and comedy. But you cannot mix tragedy and farce. In this holiday panorama several episodes incline to the farcical; and when Mr. Reed introduces two "refaned" shop-girls into a smart hotel bar, he cannot resist the temptation to turn the little scene into a broad music-hall sketch. Humble people wondering how to behave in expensive surroundings is perhaps the most popular and characteristic of all British jokes; it is surely pressed too far when the girls, not knowing the name of a cocktail, order Benedictine and drink a full pint-glass apiece! After this, it is impossible to revert to the serious consideration of the nurse's feelings: the mood of reality is destroyed. A pity, because *Bank Holiday* has so many good moments; at the outset, a workman who climbs half-way up a ladder with his load and climbs down again the minute the whistle blows; later on, the sketch of a rural police-sergeant by Wilfrid Lawson. I liked too Hugh Williams's office clerk undergoing the excitement and tension of his first affair only to find all the hotels full so that he and his girl have to sleep on the beach. But John Lodge's bereaved husband was too self-consciously noble.

The Goldwyn Follies at the Odeon is far from being the supercolossal Blondiparade that you might expect. Mr. Ben Hecht has been called in to poke fun at Mr. Goldwyn's own methods, and his brisk satire at Hollywood's expense holds together a series of first-rate turns including the crazy Ritz Brothers, the ventriloquist's doll Charlie McCarthy, Helen Jepson (in bits of *Traviata*), Mr. Menjou, a new crooner, and innumerable cats. The film is in colours and rather long, but it is remarkably gay, witty and enjoyable. I have not been able to see *Scarface* at the Carlton, but I hope the policy of reviving top-notch films will spread. In London, if you miss a General Release, you rarely get another chance to see a film. But in Paris the better films wander for years from one district to another, and a very much larger choice is thus always available.

The Film Society presented an adaptation of Pierre Loti's Basque novel, *Ramuntcho*, containing some charming photography of the Pyrenees, a performance by Françoise Rosay of the perfection to which she has accustomed us (her work in *Carnet de Bal* is the finest piece of film acting lately seen in London), and an attractive picture of the sunny, easy-going life of a Basque village whose principal activity is smuggling. Local colour, in the shape of music and dancing, is rather too plentifully applied, and the young hero's military service in the Colonies is dwelt upon to the detriment of the story as a whole.

I should like to draw attention to two performances at the Phoenix Theatre this Saturday in aid of the Basque children in England; at these the principal film will be *The New Spain*, a documentary which shows little of the actual fighting, but much of events in Spain between the elections of February, 1936 and the outbreak of civil war in the following July, and concludes with specimens of the work of industrial and educational consolidation now proceeding behind the Republican lines. The performances are at 6 and 8.45 p.m.

PETER GALWAY

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THE month brings us one of the greatest of all symphonies and perhaps the very greatest of all quartets. The quartet is Beethoven in *A minor, Op.* 132; the symphony is Mozart's last, in *C major* (K.551), commonly called the "*Jupiter*," but not very happily; for, as Professor Tovey remarks, "his artistic nature was neither Roman nor Graeco-Roman: he was as Greek as Keats." The temptation to discuss the nature of Mozart's genius with reference to this symphony is severe, but it must be resisted. Here is a new recording of the sublime work by Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on seven H.M.V. sides (the eighth occupied by the pretty little overture to *La Finta Giardiniera*); does it satisfy our private conception of the work, does it surpass existing versions? Well, it is a fine performance, and finely recorded; but I have no hesitation in declaring it to be unequal to the famous Beecham set on Columbia. A certain amplitude of tone makes the new album most impressive; but it is won at the cost of complete clarity. The Vienna echo is no longer so troublesome as it was; but there is still something in the acoustics of the hall that gives a supernatural shine to the strings (though their muted tone in the *andante* is exquisite) and prevents us from hearing the wood-wind in true proportion. The latter is the more serious flaw: in the prodigious contrapuntal elaborations of the finale it is essential that every strand shall be audible, and too often we have to supply mentally, from the score, the voices of oboe and bassoon. Nor can Walter's reading, sensitive and eloquent though it is, compare with Beecham's fiery intensity; but then the latter's "*Jupiter*" has long been one of the finest things available on the gramophone. Compare (if you have time: nothing could be more interesting) their treatment of the tragic minor outbursts in the *andante*, the different phrasings they secure in the Trio of the Minuet, or—most revealing of all—their realisation of the colossal finale: here Walter starts off at a pace decidedly slower than usual, and we settle down to watch it justify itself by results, only to discover before long that the original *tempo* is forgotten, and that we are now spanking along at fully the normal rate. Without rigidity in detail, Beecham maintains his opening *tempo* with rock-like persistence; and, to mention a last detail, how splendid is the tension generated at bars 255-8 of the finale by the emphasis he lays on the ringing thirds and seconds in the brass!

A new record of Brahms's *Tragic Overture*, played by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, ranks with his recent *Pastoral* as the finest recording we have yet had from Toscanini. In this respect there is little to choose between this and the Beecham version which I reviewed last October; but Toscanini excels in the weight and drive which were lacking in the opening and closing sections of the older records. I was sorry to find Mr. Francis Toye disparaging this work the other day; is it not one of the most consistent pieces of musical thinking in Brahms and superior to more than one movement in the symphonies? It occupies three H.M.V. sides, the fourth having a delicious performance of the Minuet from Beethoven's *First Symphony*. Beecham and the L.P.O. are as brilliant as you would expect in the familiar group of excerpts from Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* (2 Cols.), but I don't think the company should have allowed us to hear the maestro congratulating his men at the end of the *Danse des Sylphes*—unless they propose to turn him into a new Pachmann. Benjamin Britten's arrangement of some of the Rossini *Soirées Musicales* is excellently recorded on two Deccas by the Charles Brill Orchestra, but Britten has been less successful than Respighi in his choice of tunes, none of which reaches the level of those in *La Boutique Fantasque*. Other attractive orchestral records are: Landowska in Handel's *B flat Harpsichord Concerto*, Op. 4, No. 6 (two H.M.V.'s), the L.P.O. (Goossens) in Grieg's *Elegiac Melodies* (one H.M.V.), the Boston Promenade Orch. (Fiedler) in Chabrier's *Espana* (one H.M.V.), and the Orchestre Raymonde in sparkling Polkas and Galops by Offenbach and Johann Strauss (one Col.).

The Beethoven *A minor* has been entrusted to the Busch Quartet, who take eleven sides, wisely leaving the last blank (H.M.V.). It is the fashion to consider this quartet flawless, at any rate in Beethoven; and, while I cannot agree with this verdict, it is true that they convey more of that master's spirit than any other organisation heard in London. Much can be forgiven a Quartet who really rise to the height of the argument of the *Heiliger Dankgesang* in the *A minor*, and this the Busch very notably do: in their hands the movement becomes what it is, an infinitely receding series of mystical revelations. Neither of the two Columbia sets convey this inward intensity and absorption, and that by the Lener Quartet, though beautiful in finish, seems intellectually unequal to the whole work. I wish however that the Busch were as satisfying in execution as they almost always are in conception: the clarity of the part-writing is sometimes obscured (even in the hall) by over-impetuous detail, and the leader often offends with untidy runs and a tendency to squeeze phrases out of shape by excess of zeal. Except in the *Heiliger Dankgesang*, the performance of the London String Quartet seems to me no less noble and far more finished than that of the Busch; but their recorded tone, though splendidly full, is rather coarse; so that on the whole the new *A minor* must rank as the best version available. Columbia publish two early works of Beethoven, the *Serenade, Op.* 8 by the Pasquier Trio on three records—a slight affair which there was no need to re-record in view of the excellent Goldberg-Hindemith-Feuermann set, and an attractive *Horn Sonata, Op.* 17, which is well worth hearing in a sound performance by Gottfried von Freiberg and Yella Pessl on two records. Wilhelm Kempff, whom, on the strength of his records, I imagine to be one of the best Beethoven pianists in the world, offers an exemplary *Sonata Pathétique* on two Deccas. Szigeti and Petri join forces in an interesting and unconventional reading of Brahms's *D minor Violin Sonata, Op.* 108 (three Cols.).; this is a good set, but I confess to a preference for the freer and more lyrical treatment of the work by Kochanski and Rubinstein on H.M.V. Paderewski's playing of the Haydn *F minor Variations* on a single H.M.V. cannot compete in neatness and finish with that recently recorded on two Parlophones by Lili Kraus; but it is not true, as has been stated, that the Paderewski version is cut: he gets it all on to one record by (quite justifiably) omitting all repeats and adopting faster *tempi* throughout. Other good piano records are Kilenyi in three Chopin *Etudes* and one *Prelude* (Col.), and Eileen Joyce in two unfamiliar Rachmaninoff *Preludes* and Dohnanyi's *Rhapsody in C major* (Parlo.). Yella Pessl has an excellent version (Col.) of Handel's *Chaconne in G major*.

Operatic records are now few and far between, and those that do appear come sometimes from singers (Marta Eggerth, Jan Kiepura) who cannot be taken seriously by musicians: I dread the epoch of movie-opera that already threatens us with its amplified warblers and streamlined divas. Eyvind Laholm's Parlophone record of Florestan's aria from *Fidelio* must be mentioned because it is the first version of this music to appear in England; it is not really satisfactory, having been shorn of its wonderful orchestral introduction and recitative to make room for a wretchedly sung aria from *Ballo in Maschera* on the reverse; Decca should issue one of the two complete Polydor recordings (preferably the Völker) of this glorious scene: the modulation from the calm A flat major *adagio* to the feverish F major *allegro*, and the tense, visionary melody on the oboe which follows it, make this one of the most exalting moments in all opera. The two latest issues in Parlophone's Historical Series are brilliantly successful: Bonci's arias from *Bohème* and *Faust* display the charm of the lyrical tenor who was for years Caruso's only serious rival and was even preferred by some connoisseurs; while for the sake of the singing of Emmy Destinn in *Senta's Ballade* and *Isolde's Liebestod* one willingly endures an absurdly inadequate orchestra; the voice is very clearly reproduced, and Destinn's grip and command of "atmosphere" in the *Ballade* and the certainty of her attack on all those high G's are admirable. Present-day opera is represented by two H.M.V. discs from Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, based on the negro play seen in London some years ago; the music makes agreeable, but not very original, use of simple jazz rhythms and "spiritual" melodies, with a dash of Puccini thrown in. The singers, Helen Jepson and Lawrence Tibbett, are not coloured; Tibbett's solo record is the more effective of the two, but those who saw this artist's splendid Iago at Covent Garden last year will wish that we could have had some Verdi from him, especially some samples of his performance in *Simone Boccanegra*, a masterpiece unknown in England.

One of the finest sets of records ever made is the album of seven ten-inch records of Debussy songs sung by Maggie Teyte to the accompaniment of Cortot, and now available on the H.M.V. Dealers' Special List No. 2. It contains both sets of the Verlaine *Fêtes Galantes*, the *Trois Chansons de Bilitis* (Pierre Louys), the Tristan Lhermite *Promenoir des deux Amants*, one of Debussy's own *Proses Lyriques* and the enchanting *Ballade des Femmes de Paris* (Villon). The recording is exemplary, both artists show the most intimate understanding conceivable of their friend's music, and we are reminded of the disgraceful fact that, though Maggie Teyte is by far the greatest living Mélisande, she was not invited to give a single performance in the recent Covent Garden revival of

Pelléas. Another song-album of more than usual significance is the collection of twenty Russian songs recorded on five Parlophones by Vladimir Rosing. The composers represented are Glinka (2), Dargomijsky (1), Nevstruev (1), Borodin (1), Rimsky-Korsakov (2), Tchaikovsky (4), Arensky (2), Gretchaninov (3), and Rachmaninoff (4); I cannot pretend to be so familiar with the corpus of Russian song as to know whether this is a particularly cunning selection, but most of them seem to be masterpieces. The listener is grateful for Richard Holt's admirable booklet, which gives phonetic equivalents of the Russian texts with a literal translation beneath each line—an excellent plan already used in the Rosing-Moussorgsky album. The singer's individual and somewhat theatrical style does not suit all the songs; his inability to produce an even flow of restrained tone is unkind, for instance, to the delicate line of Tchaikovsky's *At the Ball*—one of the world's most haunting songs; compare the interpretation of the great Russian tenor Sobinoff (still available in the H.M.V. Historical Catalogue), who sings it about half as fast and with a romantic, aristocratic melancholy worthy of Turgenev. But in spite of occasional artistic shortcomings I cordially recommend this, one of the freshest albums of recent months.

Of single *Lieder* records the best are Flagstad's *Cäcilie* and *Seitdem dein Aug'* (Strauss), Schumann's *Mariae Wiegenlied* and *Zum Schlafen* (Reger) and Karl Erb's *Nussbaum* and *Mondnacht* (Schumann): all H.M.V. An interesting addendum to the *Lied von der Erde* album is a Mahler song to words by Rückert, *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, magnificently sung by Kerstin Thorborg and recorded at the same public performance in Vienna (Col.). Although it dates from 1902, this song anticipates the sentimental resignation of Strauss's Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, without of course the irony, charm and humour that delight us in that heroine—it is as though we had followed her into church at the end of Act I. As a piece of late, over-ripe romanticism it is rather beautiful. We must all, by the way, start badgering the companies until they consent to issue leaflets of the words of songs with their records; to publish a Mahler, Wolf or Fauré song without the words is unworthy of their present standing in the world of music. Decca, too, should have given us the words of De Falla's delightful *Seven Popular Songs* which Nancy Evans (brave woman) has recorded on two discs; brave, because Conchita Supervia's singing of these songs is unforgettable and has fortunately been preserved for us by Parlophone. (I remember too a brilliant Columbia set by Maria Barrientos with the composer at the piano, which ought to be issued in this country.) Miss Evans makes a very creditable attempt at the unfamiliar idiom, but is handicapped by the accompaniment which, in the opening bars of *Jota*, is more comically inept than any gramophone piano-performance since the dear old happy-go-lucky days of *circa* 1903.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Modigliani at Tooth's

Modigliani was probably the finest painter except Pissarro that Jewry has produced. He was of the same generation as Picasso, Derain and Braque, but he died in 1920 at the age of thirty-six. He was conspicuously influenced by Negro sculpture, and also by Cézanne, but his painting remained intensely Italian. To find a parallel to it you have to look at Masters like Neroccio or Lorenzo Monaco. Here are the same delicate curves, the same engaging texture, the same pathos, and the same elegance. Compared with the Fauves who were his contemporaries, he is all gentleness and charm—one cannot be altogether surprised that he died young, but it is pathetic that so easily enjoyable a painter should never have known success. His pictures do not suggest that he had powers much beyond those that he expressed. But within his limits how entirely delightful he is! And in some of his portraits of simple creatures, the Apprentice, the Grocer's Wife, the Little Girl, how exquisitely he combines expressiveness with decoration! A *gouache* of a Caryatid shows vividly the feeling for plasticity that is behind all his works. The truth seems to be that he first grasped his models as three-dimensional bodies, and then depicted them, like a Sienese, in arabesque. The first impression is of a linear music, Gothic, mannered if you like, but often very moving. He is not comparable with the greatest modern painters, any more than the Lorenzettis or Sassetta are comparable with Raphael. But his prodigious elegance excites our nostalgia for an imaginary past. He is, in fact, a Pre-Raphaelite in a truer sense than any of the English Brotherhood.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, March 19th—
Peace and Security Crusade Dance, Transport House, 7.30

SUNDAY, March 20th—
Joseph McCabe on "The New Anglican Theology," Conway Hall, 11. Chamber music concert, 6.30.
A. F. Dawn on "Totalitarianism in England," 153 Finchley Road, 6.15.
Lascelles Abercrombie's: "The End of the World," production by Contemporary Theatre, 53 Finchley Road. And on March 27th.

MONDAY, March 21st—
Discussions on the Political Crisis and next production by Unity Theatre: "Bury the Dead," Old Unity Theatre, Britannia St., 8.
The Very Rev. W. R. Inge on "The Philosophy of Mysticism," University College, 8.15.

TUESDAY, March 22nd—
E. J. Faithfull on "The Psychology of Huxley's 'Ends and Means,'" Friends House, 1.20.
Miss Evelyn Fox on "Modern Developments in Mental Welfare Work," Royal Society, 5.15.
Ellen Wilkinson on "The British Cabinet Crisis and Its Repercussions in Europe," Huxley Building, Exhibition Road, 5.15.
Prof. W. M. Macmillan on "The Attack on African Backwardness," Royal Empire Society, Northumberland Ave., 6.30.
W. B. Curry on "Rationalism and Education," Conway Hall, 7.
Dr. G. J. Renier on "A Foreigner Looks at England," Mary Ward Settlement, 8. And on March 29th.
"Idiot's Delight," Apollo.

WEDNESDAY, March 23rd—
Gala Performance of "Idiot's Delight" in aid of Mothers' Clinics. Particulars from Mrs. Anthony Wheeler, Kensington Palace.
"Flood Tide," Phoenix.

THURSDAY, March 24th—
Vera Brittain on "The Changing Scene," Livingstone Hall, 8.
The Rt. Hon. Lord Noel-Buxton on "The German Claim to Colonies," Kingsway Hall, 8.15.
Dr. John Rickman on "Does It Take All Sorts to Make a World?" Caxton Hall, 8.30. And on March 31st.
Royal Philharmonic Society Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
"Road to Gandahar," Garrick.

FRIDAY, March 25th.
J. McNair on "Fascism," Essex Hall, 8.15.

MUSSOLINI

AUGUST 1934:
"His death (Dr. Dollfuss') more than anything else, signifies the continuation of Austria's independence. We would fail in our pledges if we permitted the most trivial violation of that sacred pact."
("*Keesing's*" *page* 1328 *para. F.*)

MARCH 1938:
"I congratulate you on the way you have solved the Austrian problem."—Telegram to Hitler—
("*Keesing's*" *page* 2977 *para. A.*)

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Lions and Shadows: An Education in the Twenties, by Christopher Isherwood (Hogarth, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is the autobiography of a young man who went up to Cambridge in 1923. The author was not typical of his generation: he was extremely unlike others and one's interest is not merely because he describes his experience brilliantly, but because he suffered, in an extreme form, from what is sometimes called "escapism," so that his account is almost a psychological case-paper. Mr. Isherwood was an exceptionally intelligent and imaginative schoolboy who won a scholarship with the highest marks of anyone of his year at his college. No career apparently could open more auspiciously. Lest anything should be wanting, his closest friend at school had got a scholarship at the same college and was lodged on the same staircase. No doubt approving parents reflected that the two young men had only to go on as they had begun. Actually each other's company was so fatal a drug that they might just as well never have gone up to Cambridge at all. They attended lectures in a trance and scarcely opened books: they were too busy. For they were creating a world which they called Mortmere. Cambridge, they had recognised at once, was an enemy city filled by the remote bogy figures of dons, who formed "a combine" directed against them. The representative of all academic swotting, athletic pot-hunting, and donnish hatefulness was *The Laily Worm*. Wherever they went they met his secret agents. They recognised from the tones of a Cambridge haberdasher that the man was an Important Spy. The University authorities, they believed, had instantly detected that they had seen through their vast and imposing game of bluff. Isherwood and "Chalmers" walked about knowing themselves marked men.

* * *

At the same time they found, in their loneliness, strange consolations and alliances. A door in Silver Street was found to lead into "the Other Town" which could only be visited after dark. I suspect that Chalmers must at some time have read H. G. Wells's beautiful imaginative little story, *A Door in the Wall*. In the darkness they leant over bridges and dropped pennies into the river in a state of trance-like fascination. One night Isherwood noticed the name, Garret Hostel Bridge.

> "The Rat's Hostel!" Chalmers suddenly exclaimed. . . . Now we both became abnormally excited: it seemed to us that an all-important statement had been made. At last, by pure accident, we had stumbled upon the key-words which expressed the inmost nature of the Other Town. "The Rat's Hostel" we kept repeating to each other, as we hurried back to our rooms to discuss this astonishing revelation.

The denizens of the Rat's Hostel were at war with their enemies and would protect them. Chief among these protective Rats were all the objects in Durer's Melancholia: the skinny greyhound, the gentle-eyed horse, the hourglass, the compasses, the skull. Graveyards were "Rats" and so were old gnarled trees. Chalmers composed some verses which began:

> About the middle of the night, a Thing with fins
> Came to reprove the Tutor for his sins.

And fighting for them also, with the mysterious "Rats," were (reasonably enough) the ghosts of the writers they most loved: Wilfrid Owen, Katherine Mansfield, and Emily Brontë who, they felt sure, could be relied on to loathe Cambridge and its dons. When either of them was guilty of uttering an insincerity *The Watcher in Spanish* made his silent cloaked appearance, invisible to other eyes. He was naturally always present when they both met other undergraduates.

> Exactly like two children we pretended to know far more than we actually said; each new improvisation was tacitly accepted as a statement of existing fact. To admit that we were merely playing a sophisticated kind of nursery game would, of course, have made the game itself impossible. So we capped each other's fantastic inventions—drawing for the furniture of our private fairy-story world, on memories of *Alice in Wonderland*, Beatrix Potter and Grimm, and on the imagery of Sir Thomas Browne, Poe and the Ballads.

* * *

The day-dream and the act of creative imagination are so closely related that they are very frequently confounded. They appear to me, however, to be as distinct in quality as free-wheeling down a hill is from pedalling up it, and I believe a realisation of the distinction is extremely important to an understanding of the artist. Here is an instance: During the last years of the war an intimate friend of mine who was doing relief work in the devastated areas constantly imagined himself a young staff-officer who by a series of acts of inspired insubordination won immense victories in the very teeth of Foch and Haig. He went about his work with his lips faintly moving with muttered orders and his hands making little twitches in faint acknowledgment of salutes. Though he was actually brilliantly intelligent, his brain scarcely functioned while this was going on, for like all day-dreams it was characterised by lack of effort. It would have been completely different had he had a poet's vision of a battle—however unreal—or if he had really worked out in detail the operational orders necessary for conducting it (however badly). Either of such activities would have involved the use of creative imagination, and would not have been followed by shame. The world which Mr. Isherwood and his friend Chalmers constructed appears to have been a work of genuine creative imagination in the first place, but to have been used as a refuge from reality in which they could day-dream. It may be compared to an unfinished arbour in a neglected garden in which one sits dreaming of roses and lily-ponds. I have not read any of "Chalmers" work (I understand he is a poet) but parts of Mr. Isherwood's novel, *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* (Hogarth, 3*s.* 6*d.*) have the same relation to Mortmere that freshly killed mice have to the kitten's cotton-reel. But he would have remained a hopeless incurable day-dreamer if he had not been greatly attracted by real people after he had been sent down. The Belgian musician did more to make him an artist than anyone else.

* * *

A feature of his adolescence on which Mr. Isherwood insists is the feeling that he was bound to undergo a Test, from which he made efforts to escape.

> Like most of my generation, I was obsessed by a complex of terrors and longings connected with the idea "War." "War," in this simply neurotic sense, meant the Test. The Test of your courage, of your maturity, of your sexual prowess: "Are you really a Man?"

I strongly suspect that Mr. Isherwood is mistaken in this interpretation of the nature of the Test. I think that "War" was merely a convenient symbol or example of such a test, but had nothing to do with the obsession. The reason why Mr. Isherwood dwelt on the idea of the Test was because he knew that he must give up day-dreaming and face reality. If he had been using his creative imagination to produce works of art, the idea of the Test would have rapidly faded away. Actually he attempted to exorcise the obsession with a motor bicycle, and the University provided a Tripos for which he wrote answers which ensured his being sent down. The second part of the book, describing Mr. Isherwood's experiences in the musical world, his doomed attempt to take up medicine, his tutoring and slow development into an original writer, is much less interesting, as it is far more normal. It is brilliantly and amusingly written, the only fault being the common one in premature autobiographies, that the writer is too catty about himself. Some of the most amusing pages are written at the expense of "Isherwood the Artist." I have strong suspicion they are quite unfair and that Mr. Isherwood was never the caricature he presents us with. The best things in this second part are the little pictures of the people he met who influenced him: a shell-shock case, a party of philistine hotel visitors bathing in the Isle of Wight,

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There's a Devil in the Drum
JOHN LUCY

★ We published *Commando* and *Trekking On* by Deneys Reitz, *Old Soldiers Never Die* and *Old Soldier Sahib* by Frank Ritchards, and last year *In Parenthesis* by David Jones. Captain Lucy has written a war book in the same class. It deals with an Irish regiment and is real stuff. 8*s.* 6*d.*

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★ The poetic drama on which Mr. Spender has been at work for the last three years. The material is political, but the readers and audience will find many deeper levels of meaning. The play itself, produced by the Group Theatre, is running at the Unity Theatre Club until March 26th. 5*s.*

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observed very much in the manner of E. M. Forster and who give rise to the reflection:

> We have our jokes, we amuse each other enormously; we are glad, we say, that we are different. But are we really glad? Does anybody ever feel sincerely pleased at the prospect of remaining in permanent opposition, a social misfit for the rest of his life?

This question shows that Mr. Isherwood has travelled very far from the day-dream world of Mortmere. It is the mixture of reality and fantasy that makes his individual flavour as a novelist.

DAVID GARNETT

PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER

There's a Devil in the Drum. By JOHN LUCY. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This is another war-book, not a Spanish war-book, nor an Abyssinian war-book, but a Great War-book, and therefore the most topical of the three. I have often read books on that war from curiosity, but I never expected that the time would come when they could be read from a utilitarian angle, like *How to Pass the Driving Test* or a pamphlet on Hormones and the Hay Diet. Well, I had better pass on what I have found. The old regular army, which Mr. Lucy joined as a private in an Irish regiment in 1912 at the age of seventeen, was a small élite body of fine soldiers. They were the product of severe discipline and harsh training, fearless, obedient, unthinking, tough and without ideals except *esprit de corps*. It is unlikely that readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will succeed in emulating them, and the conditions under which they were produced have been changed. Of Mr. Lucy's battalion of a thousand only forty-six were left after Neuve Chapelle. Increased to two-hundred-and-fifty they were again reduced to forty. "I searched my mind for total figures and roughly reasoned that in three months ninety-six men out of every hundred had been killed or wounded. I was too weary to appreciate my own luck." That luck continued till 1917, when, returning from leave with a commission after an interval of neurasthenia, Mr. Lucy was wounded in sixteen places by a shell. It is clear we will not make as good a soldier as Mr. Lucy, but he has an encouraging word for us.

Towards the end of 1915 there was no professional army in France. The British civilian had taken over the war. Many of the straight-spined old soldiers looked askance at the civilian warrior, and, indeed, the civilian under arms presented many a strange sight to our conservative eyes.

He was undersized. He slouched. He was bespectacled. He wore uniform in a careless way, and he had a deadly earnestness, which effectively took the place of our cold-willed *esprit de corps*. He saluted awkwardly, and was very clumsy with his weapons. His marching was a pain to look at, and the talkative methods of his officers and N.C.O.'s made us blush. His childish admiration for what was left of the old army was very disarming. The old army was distinctly queasy about the future. One consolation was the sight of recently captured German prisoners, whose poor physique filled us with satisfaction and the hope that the New Army might be able to cope with them somehow.

The New Army did, and when we learned that they could fight we forgave them everything and allowed our prejudices to slide away.

Some of these prejudices were pushed roughly aside by the New Army leaders, a large number of whom were practical business men with no time for obsolete customs. These, showing an unexpected flair for fighting, brought critical and well-trained minds to bear on every aspect of the war, and won not only our respect but our admiration.

As far as courage is concerned (and the question of personal bravery, or, at any rate, of one's capacity for endurance and for fear is of great importance for us intellectuals), it would seem that there are three grades. (1) Heroic: that is to say the courage of people like Mr. Lucy and the trained officers and men he praises. It is an ingrained quality strengthened by discipline into something more or less unaffected by responsibility, sickness, depression, or fatigue. (2) Normal: that is to say the courage which is adequate for being under fire, and occasionally going over the top but which depends on morale, on the example and advice of others, on our own optimism, and on being properly rested and looked after too. That is the courage to which we intellectuals must aspire. (3) Cowardice: the sick stomach, the shattered nerves, the conviction that we are killed before we go forward, that we cannot win, that anything is better, even shamming ill or a self-inflicted wound, than remaining where we are. The instances Mr. Lucy gives of this are remarkably few. His book is a straightforward account of fighting and remarkable for honesty and verisimilitude rather than style or quality of thought. It is the work of a well self-educated man. It is not very easy to draw character when everybody mentioned from his brother onwards is doomed to be killed within the next few pages, but his types of pre-war non-commissioned officers stand out. What other consolations are there? Being wounded is less painful in proportion as the wound is severe—unless you are shot in the knee or the stomach—people get used to a great deal, and in the retreat from Mons were able to sleep on the march, and for Mr. Lucy there is his religion.

> I had seen the travail which God had given the sons of men to be exercised therewith, and at the beginning of life it was proved to me that great calamity is man's true touchstone.

Perhaps it is—if you survive—but the moral of his book seems to me that everyone who knows what war is like should do anything they can to avoid another one, and that it cannot be avoided by being willing to do one's bit when the time comes, nor by supporting the Gadarene policy of the National Government, with its slogan:

> Let us endure and see injustice done;
> It is but for an indefinite period.

CYRIL CONNOLLY

HITLER

I Knew Hitler. By KURT G. W. LUDECKE. *Jarrolds.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

During the early years of the Nazi movement, Herr Ludecke acted as an official, international propagandist and money collector. His book is so different from ordinary anti-Nazi books, and, often, so damaging to Hitler, that those with a limited knowledge of the subject may doubt its authenticity. The numerous photographs of authorisation papers signed by Hitler, however, should reassure some, and others will recognise the stamp of truth in detail after detail. Only in personal affairs, and in puffing Nazi idealism, does the author display naïveté and disingenuousness, and this, paradoxically, is reassuring in itself. The kind of man he is may be glimpsed in the following quotations; the first emphasises how much time propaganda took up, once, in Rome:

> I could not even find time to visit St. Peter's, and barely managed to squeeze in a night with a Russian lady.

And here he is as an admirer of music, speaking of Wagner:

> It is Nordic to the last flute-note.

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Lastly, as an ethnologist :

> Examination shows that the Aryan, Caucasian or Nordic strain, whichever term one prefers, has been primarily responsible for the culture of the Occident. Perhaps for the best in the Orient, also ; I have seen a Brahmin in Delhi with grey eyes.

On the other hand, and in the ordinary sense, Herr Ludecke was no fool, as Hitler realised. He began life before the war as a successful Casino adventurer : mistresses, Monte Carlo, and money from goodness knows where. During the war he behaved, shall we say, with a prudence as intricate as it was extreme. Afterward he claims to have felt the call to help a disgraced and crumbling Germany against "Jewish-Marxist exploitation." It is at this point that his reminiscences become of value for every student of Nazi history. There are, for example, invaluable sidelights on how Hitler fought a way to the top for his own tiny party from among a host of other, almost identical organisations, such as the "Wehrwolf," "Jungdeutscher Orden," "Bund Bayern und Reich," etc. It was the period when Hitler was first launched on nationalist Munich drawing-rooms by the Hanfstaengels. I can go so far as to say that no book I have read gives a more intimate, or more credible, account of Hitler's private life, habits and prejudices. The fact that he is, and always was, an utterly unscrupulous neurotic for whom betrayals, lies and murders are merely the natural tools of existence, is made still plainer than before. Herr Ludecke has included a wonderful set of "candid snapshots" of himself talking to Hitler. The former is translating some insulting anti-Nazi article or other, at a picnic, and Hitler was photographed at the precise moment of saying, "I don't care what they call me as long as I get what I want." M. Blum and Mr. Chamberlain should carry a copy of this photograph in their note-cases. There is one principal and constant thought which comes to the reader of *I Knew Hitler*, and that is that the statesmen of Europe do not understand Hitler in the least. From his obscure and ridiculed beginning, he has proclaimed his aims ; they are to conclude with a victorious revenge on France, and a Germany supreme in Europe. When, in the process of achieving this, he is occasionally forced to deny it, he denies it, and the democracies inexplicably believe him. A *fait accompli* promptly ensues ; everyone is horrified ; he is one step on, and the process repeats itself. And yet people like Mr. Chamberlain still imagine that they can do business with him just as if he were some respectable old solicitor. One prays for them to read this book, and to begin to understand what is meant by power politics.

Herr Ludecke came to the Nazi movement with funds, and soon began to produce a conspicuously well-fed and dressed Storm Troop, hiding their weapons in his luxurious Munich flat. For some reason, Hitler began to suspect him, and he went to prison. (It is obvious, from the beginning, that he was altogether too odd, gay and international a type for thorough Nazi approval.) Reinstated, he began a series of ambassadorships at his own expense which were to last from 1923 to 1932. Mussolini was visited first, and he had never heard of Hitler. Ford was next, who refused to contribute. The years were punctuated with return calls on Hitler, and pseudo-verbatim conversations which seem unusually convincing. There are conspiracies with Roehm, to whom, with Strasser, the book is dedicated, and fresh evidence that Hitler betrayed his own "revolution" in the Blood Bath. There is the final attempt to get Hitler to sanction a separate Foreign Office, which would have been run by the author and Rosenberg. This somehow ended in Herr Ludecke finding himself in a concentration camp—he had probably outlived his usefulness—and the present work is the outcome. Shifty though it is, the book is one of the most important additions to the enormous and ever-increasing evidence against the most dangerous man alive.

BRIAN HOWARD

THE K-H NEWSLETTER SERVICE

(FOUNDED JUNE 30th, 1936)

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"The average Austrian looks at the map of Central Europe every morning to make sure the frontier lines are still where they were when he went to bed."
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Send for a free copy of No. 89 which went last week to 23000 subscribers. Stephen King-Hall

NEW NOVELS

After Midnight. By IRMGARD KEUN. *Secker and Warburg.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Prelude in Oviedo. By JOSEPH PEYRÉ. *Geoffrey Bles.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Down the Dark Street. By JESSIE FENTON. *Hamish Hamilton.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Rachel's Children. By HARRIET HASSELL. *Peter Davies.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The Youngest Disciple. By EDWARD THOMPSON. *Faber and Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Many years ago there appeared an English translation of that excellent Czech, satirical novel about the war, *The Good Soldier Schweik*. It ought to be re-issued. It failed, I believe, to catch attention because Europe was not in its present regimented state and neither readers nor writers had been driven to find a grim solace in seeing some shabby absolute having its leg pulled. But now the sight of human beings hysterically getting themselves into some sort of intellectual and political strait-jacket and applying for admission to the latest Colney Hatch has become so common as to be the rule, we may expect a good crop of the comedies of dogma. It is to this genre that a book like Irmgard Keun's *After Midnight* belongs. Sanna has grown up in the totalitarian state. She is nineteen to-day. She knows little of the rights and wrongs of the once burning question. She is concerned with young men, with other girls who are her allies or rivals in the chase and with getting her living. She will rush to see Hitler arrive and will flirt with S.A. men. Middle-class life is changing and girls have got to keep their eyes and ears open and try to understand what is happening about them. The result is a brilliant piece of social satire, as disingenuous as *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, but serious, moving and tragic, too. Her book is easily the best in this list. Sanna not only gives a deliciously candid and malicious portrait of herself and her Storm Troopers, but is devastating about her friends. And as incident follows incident and she finds out the sort of Germany she has been born into, she becomes something more than a contradictory piece of femininity with astonishing intuitions about herself and others. In the exciting conclusion when she gets her young man Franz over the frontier after he has come out of a concentration camp, she is a resourceful and impressive figure.

If the attentions of a Storm Trooper are annoying you, call yourself a Jewess ; when Jews are present you introduce them to S.A. men as Aryans and the S.A. men tell you that their blood has recognised a fellow Aryan at once. For the cynical—and the underlying horror is that all good men become cynical in such an atmosphere of hysteria, scrambling for jobs, tale-bearing and petty espionage—the scene is a feast. Herr Schauwecker, an admired Nazi, molests girls at the theatre. "But he got into trouble and that made him hate the Jews." And when Sanna lines up with the crowd to see The Leader arrive in Cologne and has her work cut out preventing Gerti from baiting the S.A. men, Sanna observes innocently :

> Perhaps The Leader thought, later on, that the people had assembled

Ready Thursday, March 24th

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Letters to His Wife, 1897-1924

Translated by ROSAMOND LEY

The famous pianist and composer travelled for years in Europe and America, and shared with his wife his ideas on men, music and life, in these letters, which reveal a philosopher as well as an artist, a shrewd critic, a clever caricaturist, and a lovable example of the "artistic temperament." *Illustrated.* 16/- *net*

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¶ *Apropos Rose Macaulay's book on*

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because they loved him so much. But, being a Leader, he'd be too clever to believe that.

Of course, this kind of innocence can lead to trouble. Aunt Adelheid—the sort of woman who in any country becomes an Air Raid Warden—once heard the Leader speak and came back intoxicated by his oratory. She had been unable to hear what he said, but how he had sweated! Just like a great actor. But when Sanna mentioned this, Aunt Adelheid had her niece arrested.

That is the atmosphere. Everyone is against everyone else in a passion of petty spying, with the stupid on top. The mob is filled with a conviction of its own righteousness. A man is arrested for complaining that a procession is holding up his work. He leaves his bicycle on the ground behind him and the crowd, mainly women patriots, show their virtue by kicking his bicycle. The air of ingenuousness, the wicked eye for comedy and the pose of cynicism enhance the cold effect of the real moments of horror. On the one side the S.A. men weep in their cups about raw deals, and on the other the bewildered Jews sit wondering how to compound with the devil—but between them is a nasty world where it is sink or swim. It affects the character and Sanna is rather a bitch where her Franz is concerned, and something of a sadist as a writer. But what morality does one expect in an asylum? In Germany the love of human values is a dying nostalgia; it has been reduced to a sentiment on the level of that longing for Tennessee which once filled the popular songs. *After Midnight* is an immense and sinister entertainment and it should not be missed.

In one of his prefaces Henry James said something to the effect that what is stated is not written. In this way M. Peyré has failed to repeat the quality of his earlier book *A Matador Dies*. Laconically, through the figure of Morenù, one of those Asturian miners with crushed fingers who light their sticks of dynamite from their cigarettes and who carry with them into all hazards, the sober, methodical and upright mind of their race, M. Peyré tells the story of the '34 rising in Oviedo. As a piece of reporting it is hardly more than a report, so strictly is the narrative cut down to a few essential episodes. The best thing about it is the portrayal of the ordinariness of the men during the fighting—one asks if, with all the rain that is falling, a chit for oilskin could not be obtained for Morenù—and it is a pleasure to find the simplicity and gravity of Spaniards properly respected in fiction. Moreover, in the attack on the Civil Guard barracks with which the book opens, there is that curious, unsmiling sense of family obligation between the opponents—but which does not, for one moment, detain the certainty of brutal death. The general criticism, as I have said, is that all this narrative has no binding theme. Morenù, going off to die in the fields at night and not, as he wishes, in the arms of his family, because he does not want to implicate them, is a stoic figure without a meaning. It is possible that M. Peyré believes that the meaning lies in the very anonymity of people like Morenù, and in their naive notions about the power of their revolution at that time; but that does not seem to me to be enough.

That is the end of politics. *Down the Dark Street* is chosen from a number of indifferent books about tough America, because it is an unpretentious story of the Crime Can't Pay kind with an unconventional flavour. Lonny Bishop is the son of a tiresome little hairdresser and, getting in with one of the street gangs which enliven the life of adolescent America by a little petty theft, he has to abscond. He is fifteen and, jumping a train, he is picked up by a car and till robber. A sentimental friendship ensues. Lonny is trained for the downward path; the thief betrays him and, thus injured, Lonny learns to like and trust no one but himself. By the time he is out of Reform school—very well done—he has been carefully prepared by society for a Big Job. This is a simple, faintly sentimental tale, mildly cautionary and without the poker-faced cynicism of the tough school which is, of course, just as sentimental. *Rachel's Children* is American too. It is about the land. It is also poetic about the land. It is about yet another of those ancestral matriarchs with hard grips, strong wills, mannish voices and a passion for fighting their sons' and daughters' wives and husbands, which every American novelist seems to have had in his family. Miss Hassell brings competence but no special distinction to the well-worn subject. She overwrites; she fills up her sentences with adjectives and metaphors. And the metaphors are not the exuberance of imaginative observation but painstaking poetasting of the merely arty kind. She works the word "sweetness" to death. Still, I must confess that here and there she whips up the creaking waggon and things begin to move.

The Youngest Disciple is a problem, for I am a child in all that concerns the Buddha, and must take Mr. Edward Thompson's word for it that he has given a truer interpretation of Buddha's teaching than has hitherto been current. It was an odd, dangerous, but attractive idea to put this into the form of a novel. The dangers, I think, Mr. Thompson has gracefully escaped. In a series of selected episodes, some long, some short, and each a complete picture, he draws an austere portrait of the teacher, but one decorated with the lyricism, the fears, the curious, pristine, early morning coldness and sudden hot luxury of the Indian scene. There is monotony in the treatment and I am shy of oracular language; but Mr. Thompson is never oppressive and wordy and when I found myself nodding in the rarefied air of the spirit, the Blessed One would give my pedestrian mind a break:

> "Torpor is one thing, Moggallana. And the Silence of Aryans in Meditation is quite another."
>
> Moggallana started out of his doze. "The midday sun make me sink as into a swoon, Lord."
>
> Panthokori saw that the Lord's eyes were smiling. "The midday heat made Moggallana sink as into a swoon, Panthokori," he said.

No one knows this world better than Mr. Thompson and he has evoked it with considerable art. But I cannot suppress the suspicion that Moggallana was an early reviewer of Indian literature.

V. S. PRITCHETT

UNCLE ARTHUR

Arthur Henderson, A Biography. By MARY AGNES HAMILTON. *Heinemann.* 15*s.*

Those who knew Arthur Henderson best liked him best and respected him most deeply. He was lacking in all the superficial graces of life. He had none of MacDonald's virtuosity, and none of Snowden's gift of impersonating a jealous god, very ready to visit the sins of the fathers upon any of the children who ventured within reach of his acid tongue. Henderson, by contrast with these men, was stolid and unimaginative both as a talker and as a speaker on the platform. He adorned life with no telling phrases, and had no art to call a spade anything except a spade. But, with all his shortcomings as a leader for advertising managers to "put across" to the public, Henderson had the virtue of being

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supremely honest and single-minded; and very often his honesty enabled him to see and to face successfully a difficulty which the vanity of MacDonald or the hypochondriac egotism of Snowden caused his fellow-leaders merely to evade. Henderson had, moreover, in a very high degree the ability to size up a situation, and see just what could be made of it and what could not. He was very much of a realist, with great organising gifts and an abundant store of patience to be called upon when anything needed to be done.

Mrs. Hamilton's biography, albeit with overmuch flattery—to which she is prone—brings out these essential Hendersonian qualities. As the biographer of Ramsay MacDonald, whom she adulated with much less reserve in his Socialist days, she is here writing under a serious difficulty; for, in justice to Henderson, she cannot help presenting her earlier hero in most unheroic attitudes, even before the time of his apostacy. For MacDonald as Henderson's principal colleague in the Labour Party for more than a quarter of a century is here a very different figure from the man of destiny whom Mrs. Hamilton formerly loved to portray. He appears throughout as vain, evasive, and a bad colleague, with Henderson, by contrast, sticking solidly to his job without a thought of self, and always putting first the party to the upbuilding of which he had willingly given his life. We see Henderson again and again pressing MacDonald's claims to the leadership against his own, defending MacDonald, even when he disagreed with him, in the interests of party unity, loyally, if often without enough imagination, serving the cause, and giving short shrift to those who seemed to him to threaten it with disruption, however excellent their motives might be.

Henderson was a Trade Unionist and a devout Wesleyan Methodist. He served his apprenticeship first in the chapel, and then in Trade Union work and on the Newcastle City Council. He came to national politics with this training, and he carried it over completely into his political work. He believed, in the party, in the solidarity and discipline which he had learnt in Trade Union affairs. He took from his chapel into politics the deep belief that one man was as good as another in the eyes of God; and he interpreted this faith in a sense which excluded the class-war and Marxism from the range of doctrines to which his mind was open. He set to work to build up the Labour Party not for Marxism, but for a Fabian Socialism which he held out to all decent people as a moral cause. It was sometimes said of him that he was not a Socialist; but unless Socialist is held to connote Marxist that is not true. He was a Fabian Trade Unionist; and when he saw the need for Socialism in his early days he joined the Fabian Society and not Keir Hardie's I.L.P.

By temperament Henderson was always a moderate. He preferred facts to theories, and limited aims to far-reaching projects. But he was exceedingly tenacious of the aims which he did make his own. This tenacity is stamped upon his entire career; but it came out most plainly of all in his last years, when he clung to the hope of disarmament and to his presidency of the Disarmament Conference long after nearly everyone had given up hope. This tenacity, backed by a simple moral faith in the power of the right to prevail, made him by far the best Foreign Secretary Great Britain has had since the war; for it caused him to pursue, in face of every discouragement a few elemental and essential aims, never diverted from them by any secondary consideration. He conducted British foreign affairs on principle—a method which caused plenty of clashes with MacDonald—and because he acted on principle he raised British prestige.

Mrs. Hamilton brings out very well these aspects of Henderson's character and service to the Labour movement. She shows too his remarkable readiness to appreciate in others qualities which he was conscious of lacking himself. Henderson was very well aware of his own limitations, and sometimes too ready—as in his dealings with MacDonald—to give way to more spectacular claims. In his personal dealings he was apt to be rude, and was not above losing his temper; but he was remarkably generous in recognising when he had been wrong, and, as one who worked closely with him for a number of years, I verily believe he never let a subordinate down, and very often took on his broad shoulders the blame for other men's mistakes. He had great courage, as well as great loyalty, and in his qualities he typified admirably what is best in the solid body of skilled Trade Unionists whose outstanding representative he was. His attitude in the crisis of 1931, of which Mrs. Hamilton tells the story well, brings out very plainly, besides his limitations of vision, his overmastering faith in decent conduct and firm devotion to principle as the ultimate maxims of political conduct.

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Aethetic teasers can become obvious consistencies, trick pieces in the jig-saw of an artistic personality may suddenly slip into place through the mere action of personal contact with the artist himself—even of contact so tenuous that it must span a half dozen tables at the Flore or the Deux Magots. With Delacroix, quite the reverse; the artist becomes more problematic as we get to know the man, purified but three dimensional, in his Journal. There is a curious discrepancy between Delacroix of the Journal and Delacroix of the *Massacre*, once so easily defined in terms of *Sturm und Drang*, neo-gothicism, as a stormy petrel, as the pictorial counterpart of Berlioz, in fact, by all the clichés of romanticism. In the Journal he writes of Berlioz " . . . . the noise he makes is distracting, it is an heroic mess," he repeatedly proclaims his passionate approval of Mozart, Cimarosa, Racine, and Greek sculpture; of Beethoven and Michelangelo, also, it is true, but with reservations. He enjoyed Dumas but was quick to see in him a sort of necessary substitute for Agatha Christie; he thoroughly distrusted Poe and later Wagner, he loathed sentimentality, humanitarianism, local colour, Meyerbeer, and the new fashion for neo-gothic architecture. Obviously he identified himself with neither school nor tendency and hated both on principle. His only scapegoat was Ingres. His relations with people were that of a man, infinitely urban, cultivated and amiable; there were dinners at Thiers', political soirées at the home of Prince Napoleon, and Chopin made music for George Sand and her guests. By the time he reaches thirty he is no longer sufficiently interested in his affairs—never at any time ruffled or seriously romantic—to note them in his Journal. He ended his life as a distinguished bachelor, preferring his own company to that of his friends, and supplied with all the human intercourse he needed by his housekeeper Jenny, who guarded him jealously, flattered and cajoled him. His life seems to have been extraordinarily happy because it allowed him to indulge his inexhaustible craving for the arts, art, and abstract ideas.

Delacroix's tastes, opinions and theories, were he writing his

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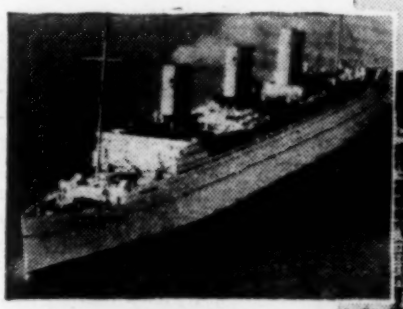

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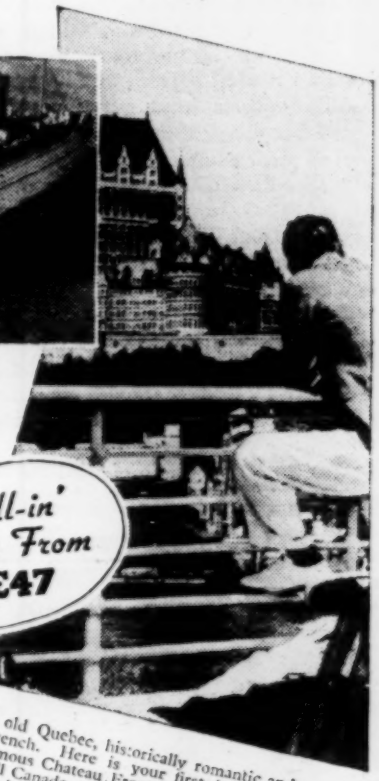

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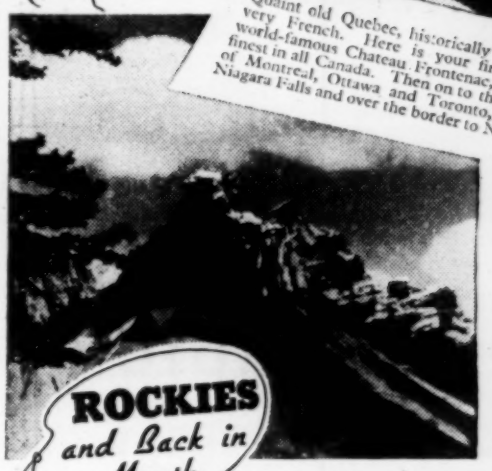

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Journal now, would not seem anachronistic; but his painting often has curiously little relevance for us. He is primarily a painter's painter, and I think that few amateurs to-day are as grateful and attracted to him as they are, say, to Géricault, Ingres, Corot, Courbet, or even David. It is sometimes difficult to pierce through the peculiarly dated subject-matter to the often exquisite sensibility. Delacroix remains, more than any other painter of his unquestioned calibre, an historical phenomenon. He was almost forced, one might say, to this function by the difficult decades during which he lived—a period in the history of art which had not yet gathered up its strength to be fully itself. He tried to straddle past and future—an uncomfortable position of which he was unaware, fortunately for him but perhaps unfortunately for his painting. He wanted, I think, to paint pictures in somewhat the same way as the Impressionists did: to fuse his figures with each other and with the surrounding atmosphere into a unity corresponding with that in nature, or at least to an emotional, rather than a purely artistic, reality. At the same time, his methods were those of the past. His studies and his paintings made directly from life are his most moving work. Those pictures in the grand manner, his chief preoccupation, he composed from sketches, which seem to lose in significance as they move farther from the model towards the final state. Raphael needed only a store of memories of contours and forms for his compositional purpose; and Rubens, though he fused forms and the air about them, used a purely conventional system—for all their exuberance, they remain, so to speak, *sous cloche*—but Delacroix distrusted the artistry of such an arbitrary unity as much as he disliked the direct perceiving of a Courbet. He turns from Watteau and, for once, from Rubens, "too much the artists," to Ruysdael's painting, "because the art in it is completely concealed." He was far too intellectual to attend exclusively with his eyes, as did Courbet or Chardin, whom he never mentions in his Journal, and too much on his guard against that artificiality which seems to be the legitimate idiom for painters who, like Delacroix, are also connoisseurs and conscious aesthetes. Confident choice between alternatives was historically impossible almost: sometimes his pictures remind one unpleasantly of nineteenth-century back-drops, and are wholly valid neither as artistry nor as direct visual perception. It seems crucial that Delacroix, for all his awareness of foreign culture: English, German, Dutch and Flemish, should never have gone to Italy. He admired Titian and Veronese but knew Venice only indirectly. Of Florence and Rome he knew almost nothing. His understanding of the cinquecento would surely have been enlarged by a visit to Italy. He might even have discovered Giotto and our quattrocento. The Journal prickles with suggestions. One cannot help speculating as to the probable effect of Italy upon his highly impressionable intelligence and, in consequence, upon the whole development of nineteenth-century painting.

This is a serious book. Delacroix's opinions on art, music, acting, literature are immensely intelligent. His essays are often too well mannered to be keenly critical. Finished articles demand sacrificial consistency and point; once crystallised on paper the shape of the idea, rather than its meaning, assumes control. In the Journal, the actual opinions set down are less important than their fluid, rich development. The cumulative impression of those forty-one years of self-penetration is one of extraordinary truth. Delacroix's observations on his craft, his notes on visual impressions, his searching analyses of himself as creator and spectator, are fascinating and informative. An articulate painter is a rare animal.

The Journal was begun in 1822. Delacroix was twenty-four and already painting impressive pictures. At this time he is still a young Werther. His dead heroes are Dante and Michelangelo, his live heroes Byron and Géricault. "Concentrate intensely before your painting and think only of Dante." He is somewhat of a prig, intellectually precocious and preoccupied with life, God and the soul. He is supremely conscious, as he always will be, of his turbulent and potent talent. His writing is too noisily emotional; later on he will want to write like Addison. There is a break in the Journal from 1824 to 1832, when he made his famous journey to Morocco. His introspection, his penchant for sublimities, his love affairs disappear in the haste of trying to catch one flaming visual impression after another. Here it would have been interesting if Mr. Pach had included at least one facsimile page of the Journal, the text of which is merely a factual, though by no means dry, accompaniment to water-colour sketches. Delacroix resumes the Journal in 1847 and continues it till his death in 1863. He plans a dictionary of the fine arts that should have included all his ideas; analyses his relations with his friends; makes hair's-breadth distinctions between his favourite painters, musicians and writers that become more suggestive with their increasing subtlety. He worries about the correct interpretation of a speech in Racine, the possibilities of the newly invented daguerreotype; an oak confirms his theories about those geniuses in whom there is "like the great scenes in nature . . . a sort of indefinable abruptness." In 1855 at Strasbourg he first notices mediaeval sculpture; "the study of these models from a period supposed to be barbarous—and I was in the forefront of those who thought so—seems to strike from me the last chains by which I was bound. . . ." This revelation was followed by the discovery of the Elgin marbles in 1858.

In the Journal there is disappointingly little about the major figures of his day, Chopin, Gautier, Mérimée, Baudelaire, George Sand, all of whom he knew; but minor characters and places come to life in swift paragraphs: the lugubrious Chenavard, Delsarte, the louche soirée chez La Paiva with Dumas and his latest mistress. Pach, rightly biased in favour of ideas, has subjected amusing but lesser interests to severe but warrantable cutting—the original Journal is twice as long. Delacroix's reactions to important contemporary painters seem all to be included.

> In the morning, someone brings Millet in for a visit. He talks about Michelangelo and about the Bible which is, he says, the only book that he reads, or practically that. This explains the somewhat ambitious look of his peasants. Moreover he is a peasant himself, and boasts of it. He is certainly of the constellation or squadron of artists with beards who made the Revolution of 1848, or who applauded it, apparently believing that there would be equality of talents as of fortune. As a man, however, Millet seems to me to be above that level; in the small number of works that I have been able to see, works differing but little one from another, a deep but pretentious feeling evidently struggles against dry or else confused execution in an effort to reveal itself.

In 1853 he is so much upset by Courbet that he apostrophises his favourite idols:

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In 1855, however, he finds himself impressed by the *Burial at Ornans* and says of the *Atelier*:

> They have refused one of the most singular works of this period; but a strapping lad like Courbet is not going to be discouraged for so small a thing as that.

Walter Pach's translation is excellent and devoted. He preserves the half-submerged personal fragrance of Delacroix's writing which becomes increasingly lovable as the Journal progresses. The illustrations are well chosen but unpardonably ill-reproduced; one wonders why the colour plates in Escholier's volumes, apparently printed by the same process, should be so much more legible, accurate and attractive. An index is sorely needed.

JANICE LOEB

WRITERS AND THEIR WORLD

Literature and Society. By DAVID DAICHES. *Gollancz.* 5s.
The Writer in a Changing World. (Edited by HENRY HART.) *Lawrence and Wishart.* 6s.

What is the object of literature? After reading these two books I am almost inclined to answer, "to be enjoyed"; to be enjoyed, that is to say, and not to be lectured about or even written about. For in truth both books, sound and decent as they are, are dull. Mr. Daiches is a lecturer in English at the University of Chicago, and his book bears all the marks of an expanded Ph.D. thesis. His purpose is not to write a history of literature, but to indicate the place of literature in human activity. Literature, however else we may define it, is, he points out, the product of a human faculty and the satisfaction of a human appetite; Mr. Daiches's object is to examine "the conditions under which that faculty operates and that appetite seeks satisfaction." For literature has, it is obvious, moulded and been moulded by social conditions; it is at once the prop and the mirror of the times. Are some of these conditions, Mr. Daiches wants to know, more favourable to the production of good literature than others? Again, a man may write from many different motives: to reflect the times, to produce works of beauty, to give the world a piece of the author's mind, to reform abuses, or to pay the butcher's bill. Are some of these motives more favourable to the production of great literature than others, and is there not significance in the fact that, however various the motives, the *achievement*, the achievement, that is to say, of literature that really deserves to be called great, is similar? Seeking to answer these questions, Mr. Daiches embarks upon a sketch of the relations between literature and its environing conditions which, beginning with medieval literature, proceeds from the Renaissance period to the seventeenth century, includes the Augustan age and the Romantics, and ends in the twentieth century. It is a learned and informative sketch, containing much out-of-the-way information about how and why writers wrote and how their writings were received.

It is not Mr. Daiches' purpose to erect a scale of literary values or to indicate criteria of literary merit, but, inevitably, the temptation to give marks is too strong for him, and by the time the end of the book is reached he is scheduling the stigmata of the great writer. First, there is selection. The great artist selects only those facts which are "significant" and which direct the reader's attention to "significant" aspects of human experience. Secondly, there is organisation. The facts selected must be arranged and bound together "in such a way as to give a sense of truth and completeness." Aristotle, in fact, was right to "put the plot first." Thirdly, of course, there is language and style. Fourthly—and here at last we come to it—there is what Mr. Daiches calls a "humanitarian outlook," which turns out on examination to be nothing less than a burning sense of indignation at the injustice and inequity of the existing state of society, combined with a determination to replace it by a better state of society. Literature, after all, can only be enjoyed under certain conditions; ideally we need a free mind, a full belly and a quiet room. For most human beings these conditions do not exist. It is the business, then, of the great writer to demand for all mankind the conditions under which alone the great writer can be appreciated.

For my part, I agree with Mr. Daiches' conclusion. Literature should, it is obvious, have a social effect. For what, I should like to know, is the object of reading unless something definite comes of it? What is the sense of reading history, philosophy, morals or biography unless it affects your own life and action in the present world? What is the point of reading poetry or fiction unless, as a result, you see more beauty, more passion, more scope for your sympathy in the world than you saw before? Nor is great literature ever achieved for its own sake. The great writer, conscious of a world order, inspired by an irresistible impulse, is not content to describe the life of man. He seeks to change it and to mould it nearer to his heart's desire. For a man cannot have the energy to produce great literature without having the energy to wish to pass beyond it. "A small artist," as Chesterton once put it, "is content with art; a great artist is content with nothing except everything," which means that he will not be content with the world as he finds it, or to leave it as he finds it. In this sense all great writers are reformers as well as reporters of life. It is characteristic of the moderns that it is not the souls but the environmental conditions of men that should seem to them most urgently to demand reform.

So much may be conceded to Mr. Daiches, but in order to convey these simple, albeit controversial, truths he beats terribly about the bush. He is apt to be pompous. He has, he tells us, written his study in order to enable us to see literature "as one human activity among many others." One wonders how it is possible to see literature otherwise than "as a human activity" or to ignore the fact that there are "others." He uses expressions which sound as if they mean something, but really mean nothing. Some states of society, he tells us, give to the author's work "a richness of universality and cogency that springs" [*sic*] "from contact with the most elemental facts of life—and death." One wonders in what states of society the author does not achieve contact with the "elemental facts of life—and death." And only a very young man, one feels, could really bring himself to believe that "the study of history will enable us to understand and so to control the world into which we are born" or that the reading of "poetry and imaginative writing" will give us a knowledge of the motives that "impel" men to "act."

The Writer in a Changing World is a collection of the more important speeches delivered at the second Congress of American writers which met in the summer of 1937. The speeches are in general concerned with the same theme as Mr. Daiches', namely, the effect upon the writer of contemporary social events. Two main subjects are discussed. First, how in a rapidly changing world can the writer convey to his readers the "feel" and significance of social change? Secondly, how can he direct its flow? All the writers in the present book are "Left Wing" in sympathy;

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 497

all are profoundly opposed to Fascism; most are concerned with Spain. But, though there is community of outlook, there is little coherence of treatment. Almost every subject of political and social interest in the contemporary world is discussed. Mr. Macleish analyses and pulverises the arguments for not intervening in Spain, and seeks to show that the Spanish war is the war of all the peoples of the world. He is eloquent but a little breathless. For example: "How then can we refuse our help to those who fight our battles—to those who truly fight our battles *now*—*now*, not in some future war—*now; now* in Spain?" I suppose that this sort of thing *does* give emphasis.

Mr. Hemingway is as apocalyptic as ever. When I read him I cannot escape the conviction that it was he who in an earlier incarnation wrote the Book of Revelation. His method is one of simple announcement. Those who like this sort of thing will find this a first-rate sample of what they like. C. E. M. JOAD

COCKNEY

Cockney, Past and Present: A Short History of the Dialect of London. By WILLIAM MATTHEWS. *Routledge.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

If you listen to "In Town To-night," the weekly half-hour in which lighthouse men, tramps, boxers, chorus girls and explorers are brought to the microphone, you will have noticed the importance of the B.B.C. half of the dialogue. How at ease, how amused and impeccable is that compère who introduces us to the man in the street! How many queer sounds and gobbles on the other side! The distinction of accents, the old *Punch* cartoon of vicar and tramp, still amuses and rules us. There is a hint, even, of preserving eccentricities against the day when all English speech will look towards Portman Place. For in correct pronunciation there are degrees of correctness, and while it may be correct for a Northerner to have a Northern accent, it is far more correct for a Southerner to have a Southern one. How far the grading is due to snobbery, provincialism, a belief in "pure" English or aesthetic discrimination it would be hard to say. On all counts the Cockney dialect would probably rank bottom of a long list.

Mr. Matthews's *Cockney, Past and Present,* is as much a defence as a history. He describes Cockney as "by far the most important of all non-standard forms of English for its influence upon accepted speech ever since accepted speech emerged." That no doubt is true. Cockney differs from country dialects in being inventive and prodigal of slang: phrases such as "a flight of steps" for slices of bread and butter and "gas-pipes" for trousers appear on every page of Mr. Matthews's book, and some of them have found their way into the Oxford Dictionary. At its densest Cockney can be almost as different from standard English as Chinese. A language in which some of the words are spoken backwards, while others are replaced by metaphor or by rhyming slang from which the rhyme word has disappeared, is obviously different in kind from other English dialect. One reason why scholars have never considered Cockney a dialect (Mr. Matthews complains of this) is that it changes too quickly to be fixed and studied. Slang soon dates; catch phrases, malapropisms come and go; w's and v's are interchangeable for a few years and then divide again. Cockney, in fact, is more a fantasia on standard speech—the tune of the underdog—than a speech in its own right. As such it is coloured, joking and strong as onions—and, one may add, remarkably hideous to listen to. The dropped aitch is in its favour, but the heavily diphthongised vowels and poverty of consonants reduce English to a language of monosyllables almost devoid of rhythm. I defy anyone to write a serious poem in Cockney.

Mr. Matthews succeeds in sketching a continuous tradition as far back as the sixteenth century. One of his difficulties has been that it is almost impossible, from literary Cockney, to discover how people actually spoke. Some of his most interesting quotations are from parish records, memoirs and letters. "The idear of," "two on us," "in course" and many similar Cockneyisms were common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even in pronunciation, he suggests, there have been fewer changes than we imagine, and an Elizabethan Cockney might conceivably be able to make himself understood in Brixton to-day. Mr. Matthews makes out a good case for the more serious study of Cockney and, indeed, with this volume, contributes to it. His "Short History," the first apparently of its kind, is most readable. But surely he exaggerates when he says that Cockney is "being done to death by snobbery"? There are still street corners. G. W. STONIER

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The Trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann. Edited by SIDNEY WHIPPLE. *Heinemann.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Hauptmann trial lasted thirty-two days, and this report has therefore been condensed. But Mr. Whipple seems to have edited it very skilfully. The surprising licence allowed by the American Courts alike to witnesses, counsel, press and public makes the English reader naturally suspicious of the results achieved, and he remembers the manifest injustice of the verdicts in the case of Sacco and Vanzetti and the Scotsboro negroes. Probably many of us have wondered about the guilt of Hauptmann, but after reading this book, one ceases to wonder. Even if some of the evidence against him had been faked, enough remained to prove his guilt. The ladder found outside Col. Lindbergh's house was traced to Hauptmann. The ransom letters were in his writing. The money received by the kidnappers was partly spent by him, and partly found in his possession. Certain circumstances are mysterious. It was an extraordinary hazard that he succeeded in reaching the child's bedroom unobserved. But the wild attempts of the defence to throw suspicion on the servants failed entirely, and one is forced to believe that Hauptmann had no accomplice. The conduct of Dr. "Jafsie" Condon remains unexplained. An eccentric welfare worker in a poor district, he knew and was trusted by many dubious characters, and naturally he wished to help Col. Lindbergh to recover his child. But why did he try to get into touch with the kidnapper only through a local Bronx newspaper? There was no reason whatever to suppose that the guilty party lived in the Bronx. Yet this was the appeal to which Hauptmann, who did in fact live in the Bronx, made his response. Dr. Condon made some very unconvincing answers when cross-examined. But the book leaves you with the impression that he was honest, and that his poor evidence was due to vanity, unwisdom, and old age. This book can be recommended to those who like reading Trials, but the case did not reveal many of the curiosities of character and conduct that usually emerge in such circumstances.

Pacific Scene. By HARRY GREENWALL. *Nicholson and Watson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
When China Unites. By HARRY GANNES. *Dent.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

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repeat the same kind of superficial travel stuff and hearsay about Japan which many books have familiarised us with, *Pacific Scene* is interesting and more original when it comes to points of strategy, the recent development of the American air arm, naval manoeuvres, and "spies in Singapore" and elsewhere. The "sensational" disclosures would, however, carry more weight if sources of information were occasionally given. The author is so frequently misinformed concerning what one does know that one cannot feel complete confidence concerning his statements on other matters. Little more can be said about *When China Unites* than that it is an account from the strictly orthodox Communist point of view of recent Chinese history. It contains little or no original material and is not to be compared to *Red Star Over China*, which covers the same ground. Mr. Gannes appears to envisage a China moving to victory as a democracy. There is no mention of the dictatorship of the proletariat or of the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants which was once the Communist Party line. No convincing explanation is given of the changes in Communist policy and the account of the period 1924 to 1927 is garbled and misleading. China to-day is certainly united under Chiang Kai Shek, but one can hardly speak of any development towards democracy and this seems on the face of it hardly feasible either during the war or for a long time afterwards.

Week-end Competitions

No. 419

Set by G. W. Stonier

The lines by Dr. Johnson beginning

Wealth, my lad, was made to wander
Let it wander when it will

might easily be attributed to A. E. Housman. We offer the usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) for the best examples of a poem or passage from a poem which similarly suggests authorship other than its own. Even single lines—if striking enough—are eligible.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, March 25th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 417

Set by Claude Cockburn

Horrified by the news from Austria, Downing Street, etc., etc., an exceptionally well-informed newspaper correspondent of strong democratic convictions has been confined to his home with a nervous breakdown. He is forbidden to read the newspapers because the news in them would be disastrous for him. He is allowed, however, to receive letters. The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for 300 words of a letter or extract from a letter which at the expense of truth would be likely to be of a restorative and encouraging character. What more healing, for instance, than a paragraph beginning "It was on our way from Chamberlain's funeral to the Pollitt-Morrison meeting that we heard the news of the fall of Cordova." Remember that he will be expecting political news and will smell a rat if the letter deals chiefly with the weather; also that although the news may be invented, the patient is a well-informed man who would detect too gross a departure from the possibilities.

Report by Claude Cockburn

Results rather depressing. The affair of course was an essay in wishful thinking. It seems to me sad that 90 per cent. of competitors should envisage as the best possible news to be hoped for either "an act of God" (there were several earthquakes in Japan and two eruptions of Vesuvius) or an equally "providential" row between different sections of the enemy forces (Goering-shoots-Mussolini motif). The number who envisaged as both exhilarating and possible news of some positive action by British democrats was low. Several marred otherwise fair efforts by forgetting that the invalid was described as "well-informed," and therefore unlikely to accept the view of the Moscow trials put out for public consumption by the Rothermere press, Conservative Central Office and the I.L.P. There were plenty of excellent lines, but no entry which seems to me worthy of a first prize. I suggest that the two prizes be lumped together and divided equally between "Mike and Ike," "Benito," "Betsy," Lois Peirson, Towanbucket, R. S. R. Fitter, and Richard Blomfield.

"Mike and Ike" (closing with the almost unbearably gruesome line "Schuschnigg won his plebiscite") and "Benito" both hit on the idea of a "Black letter."

"You see Ciano wrote to a well-known pro-Fascist London journalist that the British were willing to cede Cyprus and Malta if Musso would allow them to continue using the Suez Canal.

"The journalist happened to be communing with his dog in his office when his editor walked in, saw the letter which had been left on the table, seized it and published a photostatic copy of it.

"You can imagine the furore. Chamberlain was compelled to resign, general elections were called and Halifax retired to Yorkshire, muttering about gettin' some huntin' in.

"Eden has refused to fill the breach. He says it serves old Nev. right. So the Sinclair-Pollitt front looks like having things all its own way."

"MIKE AND IKE."

"Benito" was, I thought, somewhat more convincingly detailed on the same theme:

"Did you ever hear of Mr. Alberto Fungatti? It's ironical that you should be about the last person in Britain to hear the name. He made his public debut four days ago, in the N.C., D.H. (yes), D.W. and M.G. —*with* photographed letters from the eminent! The Conservative dailies resisted publication (official secrets!) but the D.E. went native when it saw the way the wind was blowing and outdid everyone else in the noise it made. You thought the abdication crisis was a sensation? Beside l'affaire Fungatti it never fluttered an eyelid. The violence of the public reaction has been quite breathtaking; it's obvious that the apathy we've so often lamented together was merely a surface phenomenon."

"BENITO."

R. S. Fitter had an excellent opening:

"... so when Ribbentrop arrived for the negotiations he brought a bodyguard of a dozen S.S. men. These, on the second night of their visit, proceeded to get royally drunk. Then some unmitigated ass told them that the Reform Club was the headquarters of Bolshevism in England, and they went in and beat up all the members they could find, including Simon, who, by some strange mischance, was visiting there. Three members have since died, and four more are still on the danger list."

R. S. R. FITTER.

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Rates, and all information on page 497

Towanbucket deserves a share of the prizes (which he will get if he will send his address) for his ending:

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Is puzzled as well as annoyed:
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"Betsy," after explaining that "uncle says I am not to mention politics," reports sales of the *Daily Worker* going up "by leaps and bounds since this new Government we've got in power," and mentions the death of "a Mr. Leeny who lived in Italy."

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 272.—ATHLETICS

Extract from the *Sunday Mail*:

"The annual Athletics contest between Ogford and Caybridge Universities took place yesterday. An innovation this year was the method of scoring points. Two representatives of each University competed in each event but points were scored in respect of the first three places.

"With one-third of the events completed, Ogford were leading by 24 points to 16. Their representatives had taken the first and third places in every event but the 100 yds., in which they were second and third.

"The remainder of the contest, however, was disappointing to Ogford. Their athletes secured, alternately, the second and third places, and the second place only, every first place and alternate third places falling to the lads from Caybridge."

What was the result of the contest?

PROBLEM 270.—SOUVENIRS FROM ONIONPORE

Solution by Malcolm Thomson

The dimensions of the squares bought by each purchaser were:

Marion	..	$9^2, 5^2, 2^2 = 81 + 25 + 4 = 110$	sq. ninns.
Margery	..	$7^2, 5^2, 6^2 = 49 + 25 + 36 = 110$	,,
Mary	..	$10^2, 3^2, 1^2 = 100 + 9 + 1 = 110$	,,

Working.—The 9 squares purchased include 8 different sizes, selected from 10 possible sizes, viz., squares of the numbers from 1 to 10.

The clue is the fact that Marion and Margery each have one sized square in common. Therefore the other two squares bought by each must be pairs of squares of numbers from 1 to 10 adding up to identical totals. Two such pairs are possible — $8^2 + 1^2$, and $7^2 + 4^2$, which both add up to 65; and $9^2 + 2^2$, and $7^2 + 6^2$, which both add up to 85.

The pairs making 65 do not work, as no square number added to them makes a total corresponding to the sum of three other squares of numbers between 1 and 10 not already appropriated. Therefore the 85 value of these pairs of squares is the only possible one.

With the field thus narrowed, the completion of the solution becomes almost immediately obvious.

PROBLEM 269.—PASS THE SALT, PLEASE

By W. A. Caro

I am afraid my elucidation of this problem did not succeed in clarifying Mr. Caro's intentions. What he wanted solvers to ascertain was the number of different ways in which a given route could be traversed, that route consisting of the five sides of a pentagon plus its five diagonals.

Here is W. S. Barret's solution of this problem:

Each diner will clearly pass the salt twice and be passed it twice. It will therefore be passed 10 times: the first to pass it will be the last to receive it.

Let us represent the 5 diners by 5 letters, and the order of passing by a line of 10 letters, the end of which is supposed to join on to the beginning.

No diner can pass the salt to himself, nor can he pass it to the man from whom he has just received it: therefore (i) no letter can recur next to itself or next-but-one to itself.

The salt never passes twice between the same pair: therefore (ii) the four letters adjacent to any given letter are all different.

The first three letters will be different (i). Call them ABC. B on its second appearance will be framed by the remaining two letters (ii): call them (in order) D and E.

There are 5 possibilities: (*a*) ABCDBE - - - -; (*b*) ABC - DBE - - -; (*c*) ABC - - DBE - -; (*d*) ABC - - - DBE - ; (*e*) ABC - - - - DBE.

(*a*) If A is 7, E will be 9 (ii), and C and D will be 8 and 10 or 10 and 8 [2 possibilities].
If A is 8, E will be 9 or 10 (i), and C and D will be *either* 7 and 10 or 10 and 7 *or* 7 and 9 or 9 and 7 [4 possibilities].
A cannot be 9 or 10 (i).
Total possibilities under (*a*): 6.

(*b*) If A is 4, E will be 10 (i), and C and D will be 8 and 9 or 9 and 8 [2 possibilities].
If A is 8, E will be 4 (ii), and C and D will be 9 and 10 or 10 and 9 [2 possibilities].
A cannot be 9 or 10 (i).
Total possibilities under (b): 4.

(*c*) If A is 4, E will be 5 (i), C will be 9 (ii), and D will be 10.
If A is 5, E will be 4 (i), D will be 9 (ii), and C will be 10.
A cannot be 9 or 10 (i).
Total possibilities under (*c*): 2.

(*d*) By a similar argument to that under (*b*), there are 4 possibilities.

(*e*) By a similar argument to that under (*a*), there are 6 possibilities.

The total number of possibilities is thus $6 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 6 = 22$.

The number of ways in which the letters ABCDE can represent the 5 diners is $5 = 120$.

The number required is therefore $22 \times 120 = 2{,}640$.

There are 2,640 ways in which the salt can pass in the manner described.

I am satisfied, however, that neither the original wording of the problem, nor my own addendum, is free from ambiguity, and some points will therefore be awarded to all who have sent in the answers 120 and 24.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: L. Bihaly, 44 Gloucester Place, W.1. *Seven* points are awarded.

Caliban Solvers' Dinner. Friday, April 1st. Northumberland Rooms, Grand Building, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2. 7 for 7.30. Morning dress.

"Caliban" solvers and their guests are eligible. Tickets 5*s.* per head (exclusive of drink) from Miss Kathleen Salmons, 22 Chancery Lane, W.C.2.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s.* Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

PROVINCIAL CINEMATOGRAPH THEATRES LTD.

THE 28th Annual General Meeting of the company was held on Thursday last, in London.

Mr. Mark Ostrer (Chairman and Managing Director) said that the net profit, at £506,702, showed an increase of £2,777 compared with the previous year, and with £124,366 brought forward there was available for distribution £631,068, a sum not before exceeded in the history of the company. For the year under review no appropriation had been made to general reserve, which remained at £675,000 and was £175,000 in excess of the amount of the ordinary share capital. During the recent years of expansion and consolidation the directors had considered it prudent to utilise the surplus earnings to strengthen the company's financial structure. No additional permanent capital had been raised since the issue of debenture stock in 1929. During that period substantial sums had been placed to depreciation and general reserves, amounting in the aggregate to over £1,200,000, which had been used in erecting or acquiring 23 modern theatres.

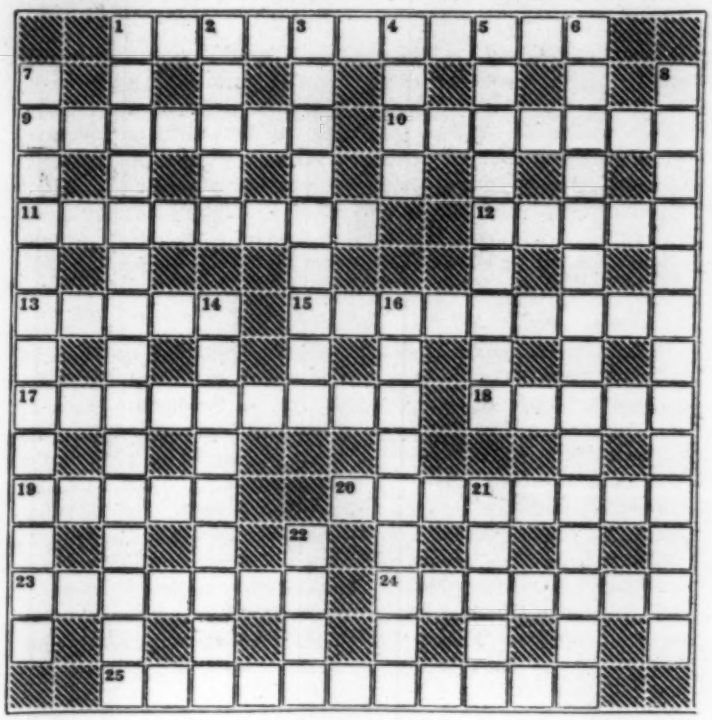
The reserve for depreciation, general reserve, debenture stock sinking fund and the carry forward now amounted to approximately £2,000,000, but this was not the whole story, as very large sums had been written off out of profits in the past in respect of expenses of issues, goodwill and premiums on the redemption of the 6 per cent. Debenture Stock, non-recurring items which had disappeared from the Balance Sheet. But for the ultra conservative policy which they had pursued they would not have maintained so definitely their predominant position.

The directors recommended that a sum equivalent to last year's general reserve appropriation, namely, £75,000, be distributed among the participating preferred ordinary and ordinary shares, bringing the total dividends for the year on these shares to 9⅜ per cent. and 22½ per cent. respectively. This dividend of 22½ per cent. on the ordinary shares constituted a record. He wished, however, to make it quite clear that these additional distributions might not be repeated, as each year would have to be considered on its merits.

In conclusion, the Chairman stated that the year's results might be regarded as eminently satisfactory. These results could not have been achieved but for the co-operation of the controlling company, Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, which had considerably strengthened the booking of the company's programmes. He had every reason to believe that next year he would be in a position to present as satisfactory a statement. The Report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 419

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
N. K. Stephen, 42 Eton Avenue, N.W.3.

ACROSS

1. Intervals of official fractions. (11)
9. Ecclesiastical backing. (7)
10. He can always account for other people. (7)
11. Does it describe something on the permanent way? (8)
12. Lear's nobles. (5)
13. Suggests a lofty calling in old days. (5)
15. The elder of twins? (9)
17. Do they ring madly in March? (9)
18. Inclines to deceits. (5)
19. Smells like inlets of the sea that don't come to a head. (5)
20. "So half my Egypt were ——d and made
A cistern for scaled snakes." (8)
23. A simple body. (7)
24. It is easy to snap such things. (7)
25. What one should presumably go in for when one has lost oneself. (11)

DOWN

1. Their produce is the result of commercial groundwork. (15)
2. Tired of precious stone? (5)
3. Bitter attitude of everyone who has a mind as it were. (9)
4. It takes the guile of a lark to put this across. (4)
5. Not suitable for inclusion in a White Paper or a Blue Book. (9)
6. A half day, but not off as a rule. (15)
7. Models for equestrian artist? (13)
8. The key of the cupboard. (13)
14. Underground mollusc? (9)
16. Unpack and pack again as it were. (9)
21. I'm upside down am I? (5)
22. The firm to give you a lift up. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

T	H	I	R	D	P	A	R	T	Y	R	I	S	K	S
E	■	C	■	I	■	R	■	O	■	U	■	H	■	I
A	P	H	O	N	I	C	■	U	N	G	U	E	N	T
R	■	A	■	G	■	H	■	C	■	M	■	E	■	E
■	■	B	R	O	K	E	N	H	E	A	R	T	■	■
S	■	O	■	■	■	R	■	E	■	K	■	E	■	H
N	U	D	I	S	T	S	■	S	P	I	N	D	L	E
U	■	■	■	H	■	■	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	A
B	R	I	T	O	N	S	■	D	O	G	T	R	O	T
S	■	N	■	R	■	Y	■	I	■	■	■	U	■	S
■	■	H	O	T	C	R	O	S	S	B	U	N	■	■
A	■	A	■	W	■	I	■	B	■	L	■	D	■	B
G	O	S	S	O	O	N	■	A	N	I	M	A	T	E
I	■	T	■	R	■	G	■	R	■	M	■	L	■	E
B	R	E	A	K	N	E	C	K	S	P	E	E	D	S

The demand for CAPSTAN increases daily—say W.D. & H.O. WILLS

"So it seems, 'Ercules"

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CAPSTAN CIGARETTES.
10 FOR 6D. 20 FOR 11½D.

W. D. & H. O. Wills Brands of The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd. C.C.598H.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

MARKETS AND THE CRISIS—HITLER'S ECONOMIC GAINS—THE FRANC.

THE City realised this week for the first time that there is a risk of war—and the inevitable rush for liquidity followed. Prices tumbled in every market and if an open "bull" position had been outstanding the fall might have been catastrophic. Even so it was severe enough, and if the selling continues much longer I fear by the end of the week most markets will have become nominal, or as the jobbers say "sellers only." On Monday the markets opened almost firmer with a sense of relief that Austria had fallen to Germany without a European war. They closed easier, however, and on Tuesday the full effect of Mr. Chamberlain's grave speech was seen. Gilt-edged stocks were the first to come on offer on fears that heavier direct taxation would have to be imposed and huge further loans for rearmament were inevitable. At the end of the day one point losses were general. Industrial shares also met with heavy selling—tobacco and brewery shares on the grounds that the taxation of these two industries would be increased, utility stocks because their costs would rise with the inflationary expenditure on rearmament, oil and gold shares because the Continent wanted cash. Even armament shares joined in the downward slide because it was felt that if industrial profits were to boom, a higher N.D.C. tax would swallow up the rise. There was some gambling in commodities and only metal shares showed slight resistance to the general downward trend. Some idea of the losses realised in one week may be gathered from the following table :—

	1937 High.	March 10th Close.	March 16th Close.
War Loan 3½%	105 13/16	103	99⅜
Consol 2½%	84 13/16	76⅛xd	71½
Austrian 4½% 1934-59	91¾	70	48
Czechoslovakian Stg. 8% 1951 ..	108⅝	96½	81
German 5½% 1930	49¼	42½	34½
Imperial Tobacco £1	9 5/16	7	6
Turner and Newall £1	5⅛	3 3/16	3
Woolworth £1	96/3	62/6	56/3
Bass Ratcliff £1	140/–	124/–	110/–
Shell Transport £1	6 5/16	4 11/16	4 1/16
Vickers 10/–	39/3	21/3	20/3
Union Corporation 12/6 ..	11 1/16	8	7½
West Wits 10/–	19 7/16	8½	6½
Rhokana £1	19	11 5/16	10½

It is difficult to say that these losses indicate panicky and foolish selling. If we have reached the stage of crisis and ultimatum in our international affairs, markets will continue to have the jitters and move lower. And no sympathy will be wasted on investors who having long resented the idea of making any stand for democracy in Spain, are now cutting losses in mortal fear of Hitler uber Alles. Nevertheless it would be unwise to sell Government stocks down to a panicky yield basis. This market is still a controlled one and money will not be allowed to become dear even with a Mediterranean war on our hands.

* * *

From the economic angle, as distinct from the question of political prestige, the incorporation of Austria as a "co-ordinated" German province is a considerable gain to the Reich. Austria, it is true, does not possess anything like Czechoslovakia's industrial or agricultural productivity. She has no export surplus, but a deficiency of cereals; her steel output is barely 600,000 tons, and her lignite output is only 2½ million tons, a year. On the other hand, she has substantial iron-ore deposits, of which Germany is badly in need; her armaments plant is far from negligible; she is an exporter of dairy produce; and her immense timber resources will suffice, for a time at least, to make good Germany's deficiency in wood supplies. Taking "invisibles" into account, Austria has had for several years past a favourable balance of payments, and the National Bank has a reserve of well over £15,000,000 in gold and foreign exchange—a welcome addition to the Reich's war chest. Finally, Hungary and Jugoslavia are both to a high degree dependent for foreign trade on what was the Austrian market. When that trade is amalgamated with the German market, which plays an even greater part in the economy of Austria's south-eastern neighbours, the economic pressure which the Reich is capable of exercising becomes very great indeed. By exclusion of imports she could now kill at a stroke nearly half the foreign trade of Hungary and Bulgaria, and nearly a third of that of Jugoslavia, Roumania and Greece.

* * *

The movements of the franc form an interesting background to the Cabinet crisis in France and suggest unhappily the prospect of serious trouble for M. Blum in the future. M. Chautemps' resignation was preluded by a considerable flight of capital, which carried the spot rate down from 154 to 160. There followed a brief recovery to 158. Bear speculators closed their commitments in the belief that the Chautemps administration would be followed, as the "two hundred families" desired, by a Government of National Union based on the Centre and prepared to repeal the 40-hour week and generally undo the Front Populaire's social reform. The formation of M. Blum's Radical Socialist coalition was greeted on Monday by further heavy sales of spot francs; the flight of capital continued on Tuesday and by Wednesday's close the rate was no better than 162, after having been as high as 168. If the bankers and big industrialists who brought down the first Popular Front government and successfully "nobbled" M. Bonnet during the brief tenure of its successor, are determined—as seems to be the case—to force M. Blum into repudiation of the Matignon Agreement, the present precarious position of the franc is a blackmail weapon ready to their hand. The Treasury has already had to have recourse to advances from the Bank of France; the resources of the Exchange Account are all but exhausted; and the urgent need to float at least £100,000,000 of Defence Bonds can hardly be met if the exchange value of the currency is slumping. If he were prepared, as M. Reynaud would probably have been, to put through a bold devaluation of the franc to, say, 200 at one stroke, and if he could secure an ample British credit to support the franc at that level, the rot might be stayed. But the Left has so far been reluctant to have recourse to a sufficiently drastic measure of devaluation, and the odds seem rather to be in favour of the only alternative, namely, the imposition of exchange control. The appointment of M. Georges Boris as M. Blum's technical collaborator at the Ministry of Finance suggests, despite M. Blum's *dementi*, that exchange control is in the offing.

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The year 1937 was the best banking year for English banks since 1930. Advances to customers—the banks' most profitable business—increased substantially, in every case larger profits were made and, in four cases out of seven, increased dividends or bonuses were declared. The insurance industry continued to expand and fresh records of life business were reported.

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THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE CO. LTD.

Points from the Speech of
SIR EDGAR HORNE, Bart.
Chairman of the Company, at the 89th Annual General Meeting held at Holborn Bars, London, E.C.1, 10th March, 1938.

Comparisons with 10 Years Ago

	1927	1937
Ordinary Branch Income - - - -	£15,600,000	£20,300,000
Industrial Branch Income - - - -	£22,400,000	£31,000,000
General Branch Income - - - -	£1,700,000	£2,900,000
Total Assets - - - - - -	£209,000,000	£330,000,000

The Year's Work

NEW BUSINESS. In the Ordinary Branch the new sums assured were **£32,457,000**, the largest amount of new business in the history of the company.

PRUDENTIAL OVERSEAS. New sums assured through Overseas branches exceeded **£8,000,000.**

WAGE-EARNERS' ASSURANCE. In the Industrial Branch the amount received in premiums increased by **£840,000.** The amount paid in claims by death or maturity of endowments was **£10,774,000,** an increase of **£2,028,000** compared with 1936. Bonus additions to claims and surrenders during the year amounted to over **£2,361,000.** The expenses of the Industrial Branch were brought down to **22.7** per cent. of the premiums.

POLICY-HOLDERS BONUSES. The rates of reversionary bonuses in the Ordinary Branch are maintained at **£2.6.0** per cent. for Whole Life and **£2.0.0** per cent. for Endowment Assurances, and in the Industrial Branch at **£1.12.0** per cent. for policies in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

NATIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS. Through the Prudential Approved Societies, with their membership of 3,700,000, a sum of **£4,656,000** was expended on benefits. Dental benefit alone cost **£566,000.**

BRITISH ASSETS. Over **81** per cent. of the assets are invested in the United Kingdom. Only **8.8** per cent. of the assets are invested outside the Empire.

Total Income exceeds £1,000,000 A WEEK